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THE DEMON OF THE DEEP:

OR,

Above and Beneath the Sea.

By HOWARD DE VERE.



At first she would not budge; but her enemies, rushing into the water, sought to detain her by clambering on the stern and pushing against it.

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The Demon of the Deep:

OR, Above and Beneath the Sea.

—:O:—
By HOWARD DE VERE,

Author of "Hook and Ladder No. 2," "The Boy Fireman; or, Stand by the Machine," "Old Sixty-Nine," etc., etc., etc.

CHAPTER I. OUR HERO.

"We shall not need you any more."
"Am I to understand that I am discharged?"
"Yes."
"For what reason? Have I done anything wrong?"
"Yes."
"What is it? What did I do?"
"Mr. Jackson says that you misplaced the pin that caused the breakdown yesterday."
"I didn't."
"Never mind; he proved it to my satisfaction, and we don't want you around here any more," and Mr. Phalon handed a grimy, oily-looking youth of fifteen or sixteen the amount due him for his week's work, and then turned to pay others in the line who were waiting for the fruits of their toil.

Bob Harris placed the money in his pocket, and turned away, feelings of resentment towards Mr. Jackson, the foreman in the extensive machine shop of Phalon & Son, welling up in his breast.

The day before, when the engine had been started, there was a crash and a snapping sound, followed by the stopping of the engine.

A close search discovered the cause of the breakdown. Somebody had maliciously loosened one of a series of pins that fastened the connecting rod to the crank, and the result was that before the engine had more than started the rod and crank were both shivered.

Jackson had ever been an enemy to Bob, and although he knew the lad to be innocent, had charged him with causing the disaster.

He slowly left the office and started on his long walk home, or rather to the vile attic rooms he called such.

"What kept you so long?" demanded Pat Harris, Bob's father, as he entered the room.

"Nothing," replied Bob, "except that I was tired and walked slow."

"Well, you'd better hurry up a little 'cause I'm fearful dry. Where's your money?"

Bob put his hand in his pocket, but did not reply until after glancing at his mother, he saw a look which plainly said, "Give it to him."

Pat Harris was a large burly man, who did nothing but lay around gin-shops, drinking up the proceeds of Bob's labor as well as that of his wife, who was a small, delicate woman, ill-fitted for the rough life she was forced to put up with.

For his mother Bob possessed considerable affection, but for his father he entertained nought but feelings of disgust and aversion, for as long as he could remember, his portion from him had always been kicks and blows.

Once in possession of Bob's wages, Pat wasted no time in repairing to a near-by grog-shop.

"Mother," said Bob, "why is it that you always put up with that man's abuse, and work and slave yourself to death to provide rum for him? Leave him and live with me alone."

"I dare not, Bob," said the poor woman. "You do not know Pat so well as I do or you wouldn't suggest any such thing. Bob, he'd follow us to the end of the earth and murder us."

"Murder?"
"Yes, he is capable of anything, and would not stop at anything. You don't know him, don't know that you yourself are a victim of his devilishness. Don't know that he is not your father?"

She stopped suddenly, just at that instant realizing that in the excitement of the moment she had betrayed a secret that had been carefully guarded for years, and falling on her knees and with hands clasped, cried:

"Bob, Bob, do not betray me. Pat would kill me."

"Then Pat is not my father?"

"No," almost wailed the woman.

"Thank God," said Bob. "I long have thought it impossible that I could be the son of a man so vile as he. And you—are you my mother?"

A look of pain crossed the features of the woman, she hesitated a moment, and then with a strong attempt at self-control, she replied:

"Yes."

"Is that the truth?" demanded Bob, his suspicions as to the truth of her answer awakened by her agitation.

"Y-e-s," faltered she in reply.

Bob more convinced than ever by her faltering and confusion that she was telling an untruth, in a slow and grave voice said:

"I am sorry to doubt you, but I must under the circumstances. I am going to ask the question again. Will you answer truthfully?"

"I will," she faintly said.

"Are you my mother?"

"No." The answer was low spoken and reluctantly given. "But," she continued in a louder key, "I have loved you as much as if you were my own. Have I not always acted like a mother toward you?"

"You have. And now, since you are not my mother, and your husband is not my father, who are my parents?"

Dreading and fearing her husband as Mary Harris did, and knowing the danger in arousing his ire, it needed much urging ere she could summon resolution sufficient to tell him the history of his previous life, and of the circumstances that had placed him in their keeping. It is not our purpose here to relate the terrible story of crime and wrong-doing which Mary Harris told Bob.

Suffice it that Bob listened to the story, horrified, as, with strained ears and furtive glances toward the door, as if each moment expecting to see and be visited with the vengeance of her husband, she told the tale.

When she had finished he arose, and with his brain in a whirl and thoughts entangled, left the house.

He remained out about an hour and then bent his footsteps homeward.

He mounted the stairs, and hearing the sound of voices in their apartment, paused in wonder, since nobody had ever visited them, and it was too early yet for Pat to have spent the money which Bob had given him.

Involuntarily he paused, and then, inspired by a feeling that the conversation concerned himself, he silently crossed the hall and stopped at the door.

"For Heaven's sake, Pat, think no more of doing it," Bob heard Mary Harris say.

"What do you take me for—to let a thousand dollars slip through my fingers in that way? It's just a matter of ten cents' worth of poison given in a neat way, and Pat Harris is a thousand dollars richer than he was."

"Don't do it, Pat—don't do it. Remember our own little babe that died when we took Bob; remember him and be merciful," pleaded the poor woman.

"No; Bob must die. Ha—ha! old woman, but he will make a beautiful corpse!" and the gin-bloated villain laughed in a coarse brutal way.

"He shall not die! You shall not poison him!" replied his wife, calling to her aid all the courage she possessed.

Long years had passed since she had crossed him by either word or deed and for an instant he was dumfounded by the event. Then his anger rose, and he almost yelled:

"By the eternal—dare you contradict me—do you—I'll show whether you'll contradict me or not, you—"

Then Bob heard him stride across the floor; then there came a thud, a cry of anguish and a heavy fall.

Bob opened the door and bounded into the room, and saw a sight well calculated to arouse all the ire in his nature. Lying on the floor with a gash across the forehead, from which the blood was streaming, lay Mary, while lying over her with fist raised for a second blow was her brute of a husband.

"Hold!" cried Bob. "Don't you dare to hit her again," and he advanced toward the enraged man.

"What!" exclaimed Pat in angry surprise. "You dare to cross me too? I'll fix you," and ere Bob could get out of the way a well-delivered blow landed him on the floor.

He picked himself up just in time to see the brute kick his wife.

With eyes ablaze with anger, he snatched a revolver from his pocket, and in a voice husky with anger said:

"Touch either of us again and I'll send a bullet into your rascally carcass."

Pat's rage knew no bounds, and throwing prudence to the winds, he darted at the boy and attempted to wrest the revolver from him. Bob struggled bravely to retain it, although he knew in which way ultimately the battle would end.

Meanwhile the poor woman who had been so brutally abused a few minutes before, slow and with evident pain rose to her feet, and with tottering steps approached the combatants.

Bob and Pat struggled for the possession of the revolver. At last, with a quick jerk, the elder man wrested it from the younger's grasp, but not without fatal results, for Bob's fingers caught in the hammer, and as his hold was wrenched loose, there was a sharp report. Then followed a shrill scream.

Both glanced quickly at the woman.

With another wild shriek she threw up her arms, and with the half-groaned words, "My God, I'm shot," sank heavily to the floor.

Bob sprang to her side, and a groan escaped his lips as he bent beside her.

He realized the truth.

She had ceased to breathe—was dead.

He remained as it were in a dazed state of mind, until he felt himself rudely seized by the shoulders, and heard the words hissed into his ear:

"Now you're off for the gallows. You shot your mother, you inhuman dog, and must suffer for it."

"You lie!" shrieked Bob. "I was you," and he struggled wildly to get loose, but struggle as he would he yet remained fast in Pat Harris' grasp, and was being wildly berated for shooting his mother, when the other tenants of the house, attracted by the pistol shot and subsequent shrieks, came rushing in.

A few quickly spoken words by Pat conveyed the impression that Bob had shot the woman, and being overpowered by numbers he was soon securely bound.

A policeman who had been summoned now appeared upon the scene, and shortly afterward two others came in.

The prisoner, Bob, was marched off to the station-house, the body of the murdered woman was cared for, and Pat was taken into custody as a witness.

A coroner's inquest was held.

Pat swore that Bob had willfully shot her, and the revolver which was put in as evidence Bob could not but acknowledge the ownership of. And then a little dark-skinned man being sworn, stated that he had been an eye witness of the whole affair, having called to see Pat, and arriving in front of the door which Bob had left open just as the shooting occurred.

The jury found that the deceased came to her death from a pistol shot maliciously inflicted by her son, Bob Harris.

The consequence was that Bob was remanded to await trial on the gravest charge that can be held against a man, that of willful murder, the penalty of which is death.

Two months dragged wearily by.

The trial day came.

We do not propose giving an extended account of the tedious proceedings.

Suffice it that he was found guilty with a recommendation to mercy, on the strength of which his sentence was made imprisonment for life.

He had been in Sing Sing but two months when one day, or rather night, when the convicts were mustered together, Bob was found to be missing.

A hue and cry was immediately raised, but Bob was nowhere to be found.

On that day, Bob, who long had been determined to escape, slipped unobserved into a large sewer which connects with the river.

Arrived at the grated river end, with a couple of files he soon filed his way to liberty through the grating.

Keeping in the shade of the dock, with but his head above water, he edged toward the southern portion of it.

He heard the cry which announced his escape and crouched down beside a log, which hid his head from view.

He heard a guard run along the string-piece, and knew that he was scanning the water.

He laid still until darkness long had settled down, and then he slowly and cautiously began swimming away from the spot.

He had reached the middle of the river and was getting weak and exhausted, so much so, that once or twice passing boats came near running him down.

At last he was forced to cry for help.

A sloop, loaded with brick, was passing.

Her gunwales were near the water's surface, and when they brought her near him Bob seized hold, and the next

moment, being drawn up by two pairs of stalwart arms, was lying full length on top of the cargo.

CHAPTER II. THE SWALLOW.

THE boatmen were much surprised to find that they had picked up a convict, and some of the crew were for binding him and returning him to the authorities.

Others admiring the pluck of our hero in braving the dangers of an escape demurred, and when Bob had told his story of the injustice practiced toward him, with one accord they agreed to keep silence on the subject and allow him to escape.

In furtherance of their words one produced one article of clothing, another something else, and in less than half an hour the hateful striped suit with a couple of bricks fastened to it was lying in the bottom of the river, while the suit with which he had been presented covered his person.

The first streaks of morning were beginning to appear upon the horizon when the brick sloop came abreast of New York.

"What are you going to do?" inquired the captain of Bob, who stood by his side at the wheel.

"I don't know. I hardly dare go in the city. What I want to do is to get on board some outward-bound ship. See, there is one ahead of us, I think. Yes, she sails to-day. See, there is an advertisement to that effect. If I only were on board of her," he added in a wishful tone.

"You want to go on board?" queried the captain.

"Yes, yes!" eagerly cried Bob.

"Well, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll cross under her bow slow, and if you can swing yourself into the fore-chains you'll be all right," said the captain.

"I can do it; I will," cried Bob, and grasping the hand of his new-found friend he wrung it heartily.

The captain changed the sloop's course a little, then bore down on the ship.

"Good-bye, all!" cried Bob, springing into the shrouds, up which he lightly ran.

The captain knew how to handle his craft, and ran so close that the lookout on the deck of the ship called for him to keep off; without fouling, they came near enough for Bob to swing himself into the vessel's fore-chains without much danger or trouble.

The lookout had come forward and with muttered curses watched the fast receding sloop, but remained unaware of her object in running so close, or of Bob's proximity.

When he turned away, Bob noiselessly climbed up the gunwale.

The lookout's back was turned yet.

He sprang lightly to the deck, ran swiftly but noiselessly across, and had entered the hold through the fore-hatch before the lookout had turned about.

Bob breathed easier now that he was safely ensconced behind a pile of boxes and in no danger of being detected.

An hour passed away, during which there was considerable noise on deck of feet hurrying hither and thither, of the boatswain's whistle, of the creaking of the blocks and cordage as the yards were squared away, or hoisted into position.

An hour later came the battening down of the hatches. Then shortly after men hurrying to and fro, then a puffing sound.

Then he felt that the ship was moving.

The puffing was from the tug which had just fastened to her.

Finally he could distinguish the fact that the tug had left them, and that they were in the open sea.

He waited as long as he could, until hunger and thirst compelled him, and then he crawled along on the top of the cargo to the fore-castle bulkhead, on which he began lustily hammering.

"What's the row?" growled some one.

"I want to get out of here," said Bob.

"Get out then," was the rough reply.

"I can't unless you let me out," replied Bob.

"Be you a stowaway?"

"Yes."

"That's a bad thing for you. The skipper's a lively man," and there came a hearty laugh in which more than one joined.

"I'll see about you," said the tar a minute later, and then Bob heard the stumbling of numerous feet on the fore-castle steps as they made their way deckward.

He crawled back beneath the hatchway and waited there patiently for liberation from his confinement.

After waiting about an hour, which seemed to him as long as a dozen, he heard a fumbling at the hatch above him.

Presently the hatch itself was raised, and glancing upwards he saw twenty or thirty pair of eyes gazing down upon him.

"Come up out of that," growled a man, whom Bob rightly conjectured to be the captain, in a surly, angry tone.

With as good grace as he was possible of, Bob climbed up until he was within reach of the deck, when he felt himself seized and drawn upward with a jerk that landed him sprawling on deck.

Bob found that the captain was a "lively one," and he did not stop at being lively himself, for he made it lively for our hero for a short while with the aid of a cat-o'-nine-tails in the hands of a stalwart jack-tar.

Bob, however, bore the punishment very philosophically, considering himself very fortunate in getting off so easily.

He was put in a watch, assigned a place in the mess, and given a bunk which happened to be empty.

That night when he entered the fore-castle, tired with a hard day's work, and sore from the punishment he had received, a groan involuntarily escaped his lips.

It was dark and he could not see any one, but a shuffling of feet told him that somebody was near. The footsteps came nearer, then he felt a hand clasp his arm and a voice said:

"I'm gosh-hanged ef I ain't sorry for you. I know how yer feel, 'cos I stowed myself away onct, and jumpin' Jehoshaphat, didn't I catch it. Does yer have much pain?"

"Yes, quite some," wearily replied Bob.

"Well, jest you get yer togs off'n you an' I'll fix up some-
thin' as'll stop the smartin' some; I'll be back in a minnit,"
and the illiterate but kind-hearted fellow hurried away.

Bob undressed, and was just about to roll into the bunk,
when the other returned with a lotion of some sort which
did much to soothe and allay the pain and irritation of his
smarting back.

"Thank you," said Bob at last, the pain greatly dimin-
ished. "May I ask what your name is?"

"Yah; Yawpey Dick. And yers is—"

"Bob."

"I'm glad to know yer, Bob," and our hero felt Yaw-
pey's hand seeking his own.

He gave it, with a hearty shake, and from that moment
a firm friendship existed between the two boys, for such
Bob afterward found Yawpey to be.

The next morning as Bob came in the vicinity of the
cook's galley, a figure struck his eye, a figure so ludic-

rously odd as to cause a smile, almost a downright laugh to escape his lips.

Seated on a low stool, with a huge dish-pan between his legs resting on the scullery floor, and which was piled high with greasy dishes, was the queerest-looking specimen of humanity that Bob had ever seen.

Hair of a fiery color and unkempt as the mane of a wild mustang, eyes of a blue so pale as to appear white, which looked oddly strange beneath those heavy red eyebrows and lashes.

A mouth of huge dimensions, so huge, that as the owner glanced up and smiled at seeing Bob, it looked to the latter as if it would be necessary to set his ears farther back, should his risibilities be excited to any greater extent.

"Hello, Bob," said this oddity, his jaws appearing as if worked by a spring; and then noticing Bob's look of amazement and guessing the cause of it, he added, "yer don't know me. I'm Yawpey."

"Are you?" said Bob, smiling in spite of himself. "I didn't recognize you. I'd know you again if saw you, though."

"Yah, I shud say so; not pertickly hansum, am I?" and Yawpey, evidently aware of his homeliness, laughed good-naturedly.

Bob by this time had learned that he was on board the *Swallow*, and bound for the East Indies.

His only object had been to get away from New York, and it made no difference to him which way or where he went.

Bob's strong taste was for machinery and engines, still his disposition was that of a rover, and he indeed felt glad that he had now the opportunity of visiting foreign lands.

The story that Mary Harris had told him was not forgotten, but resting as he did under the stain of a great crime, liable to be arrested the moment he put foot in New York, to prosecute inquiries, or search in proof of what she told him, he was forced to acknowledge that his chances of ever being able to claim his own real position in the world were very slight.

He allowed it to pass from his mind, and strove to enjoy the present, feeling sure that the future would take care of itself.

The friendship between Bob and Yawpey increased day by day, Yawpey looking up to Bob as a sort of superior being, and treating him with a respect due such.

The good ship *Swallow* was well on her way to her destination when a fierce storm arose.

The wind whistled wildly through the rigging, the waves arose to mountain height.

For awhile the *Swallow* behaved well, but she was heavily laden with a miscellaneous assortment of goods, and finally a cry, almost as much dreaded at sea as that of fire, arose.

It was that the cargo was shifting.

The ship began to careen badly; she refused to obey her helm.

The cargo slowly but steadily shifted over, and the waves that were rushing and breaking over them forbade their opening the hatches and making any attempt at righting it.

With faces pale, and with fear showing in every lineament of their features, the officers and seamen gathered in little knots, expecting and waiting in a sort of horrible fascination for the moment to come when all would be decided.

The *Swallow* careened and pitched badly and more wildly every minute, and at last through the trumpet of the captain came the hoarse words of great import:

"Let each man secure his own safety. God knows whether or not we shall weather this storm."

Bob and Yawpey set to work immediately, and as well as they could in the excitement of the moment, constructed a rude raft, fully aware that the single remaining small boat, all the others having been stove in, would have no room for them.

Others, following the same course of reasoning, followed the example of the boys, and ere long a number of odd-looking rafts, around which clustered their owners, were distributed around the deck.

They were going to join them all together, but it was fated otherwise, for there came one huge wave, the *Swallow's* masts went over with a crash, the deck was shattered, and through the shattered part the wild breaking waves rushed.

"Away, for your lives," came the trumpet command.

All was excitement.

"Now, Yawpey, away with our raft," cried Bob.

The two boys tugged away at it and dragged it to the vessel's side.

"Hurrah!" said Bob, excitedly, a moment later, as the raft splashed in the water, "she's launched. Are you all right, Yawpey?"

"Yah!" was Yawpey's reply, as a huge wave carried them away from the ship.

And not a moment too soon, for with a rending sound, which might be likened to an almost human groan of dismemberment, the good ship gave a wild lurch; there came a gurgling sound, and she had disappeared beneath the surface of the turbulent waves.

"She's gone," said Bob, with a sigh.

"Yah," replied Yawpey, "that am so," and shaking his shaggy head, he added, "and it's a good thing that we are, too."

Night came on, and with the setting of the sun the wind abated somewhat, and by midnight there was a very decided moderation in the tempest.

When morning broke, scarce more than a nice sailing breeze was blowing.

Earnestly and long both boys scanned the horizon on all sides, but they could see nothing but a waste of waters extending in all directions.

They were alone—utterly so.

Bob thought long and earnestly, and then laying his course in an easterly direction, which was determined by the position of the sun, he rigged a rude mast made of a split board.

Across it, near the top, he fastened with a bit of rope what might have been called a yard-arm, but which made the whole greatly resemble a rude cross.

On this, both boys hung their coats and getting steerage-way with the aid of another broken board, they soon had the spray breaking across the bows of the rude craft.

The day was a hot one, and before night both boys were suffering intensely from thirst, but each concealed from the other his sufferings; and each, no matter what his own feelings, strove to cheer the other.

Darkness settled down again.

It was agreed that Bob should lie down and sleep until midnight, leaving Yawpey to keep the raft to her course.

About midnight, Yawpey awoke Bob, and when the latter had taken his place, laid down and was soon fast asleep.

The wind continued fair, and when morning again broke, they had made so much progress, that Bob's eyes were greeted with a faint blue streak in the distance, which he knew must be land.

With a glad cry of surprise, he awoke Yawpey, who, when he fairly understood the glad tidings, fairly stood on his head and shouted:

"Hurrah! that's the cheese, my gobbler."

CHAPTER III.

THE DEMON.

BOB, although more quiet, felt as truly grateful as did Yawpey for the sight of land.

All day long they sailed straight towards the blue streak, which, as the day advanced, loomed up larger and larger, until at nightfall it appeared scarce half a dozen miles away.

Both boys were weak and spent, and despite the danger of landing in the dark they continued straight on, the great consuming cry, the great longing being for land, and water to drink.

Five or six hours passed away and a low, sullen roar greeted the ears of the boys.

It was that of breakers ahead, but with the wild delusion of thirst upon them they heeded it not, thought not of the danger but kept straight on.

Louder and louder grew the roar.

It was but a few feet ahead of them.

Will they strike the rocks?

No, for now the white-capped rollers and the sullen roaring is left behind.

They had struck a break in the surf and passed swiftly through.

A few minutes later came a sudden shock and Bob and Yawpey, after performing various gyrations in the air landed in a very unceremonious style on a pebbly beach.

Bob, on his hands and knees crawled back a little way, then in company with Yawpey climbed up the hill which ended at the beach a short distance, when he stumbled and fell.

First came a cry of pain, then one of joy.

In falling he had struck into a little brook which went purling down the hillside to the sea below.

"'Tis water—'tis water," he cried, and then threw himself bodily into the rivulet and pressing his face to the surface, he drank long, eager draughts of the delicious liquid.

Nor was Yawpey slow in following Bob's example, but eagerly gulped down great mouthfuls of the pure, cold water.

Yawpey felt so good after his drink that he capered around for some moments like a wild Indian; then, after another draught, he laid himself down beside Bob, and soon both tired and worn out boys were fast asleep—asleep despite the hunger that seemed gnawing at their very vitals, now that the greater agony of thirst was appeased.

Before morning both were astir, and after a long refreshing draught from the brook, they followed its course up until they came to a small bunch of trees bearing a fruit resembling, to some extent, a banana, which indeed, they at first thought they were.

However, the fruit was delicious to them and they stowed away a large quantity of it.

Later in the day from the center of the island—for such they found it to be—they saw that it was not very large, and commenced an exploration.

They had went over half way round it without discovering any signs of habitation, and had come to the conclusion that it was uninhabited, when Yawpey, who was slightly ahead, suddenly stopped, and, catching Bob by the arm as he came up, said:

"See!"

Following the direction of his finger, Bob saw a door which seemed to stand out in relief from the steeply-sloping hill.

They directed their footsteps toward the door, arriving at which they found it to be partly open.

They listened, but could hear no sound from within.

Bob knocked, but no response came.

After waiting a minute or two he pulled open the door, which opened outwardly, and entered the half-cave, half-hut.

The only light which penetrated into this dark hole, except that which came from the door, was through a narrow aperture in the roof, gazing up into which seemed like looking up a chimney, so far above the roof was the surface of the ground.

Coming from so much stronger light, Bob at first could see nothing, although aware, from the stir on the opposite side, that somebody was in the hut.

Presently objects began growing more distinct, and finally the outlines of a rude bed, on which was stretched the gaunt and attenuated form of a man, came into view.

Bob spoke to the man, whom he could see was a white man, but the person seemed as if in a stupor.

A short search discovered a bottle of liquor, and forc-

ing open his mouth Bob allowed a portion of its contents to run down his throat.

Its effects were immediately noticeable, for with a sigh and a gasp the man opened his eyes. Then as they rested on the two other inmates of the hut he started violently in surprise, and in a weak voice asked who they were.

Bob explained in as few words as possible, and somewhat reassured, the old, gray-haired man begged them to remain with him, until he was dead. "fer," said he, "I shall die soon. God has sent you to me in my dying moments. I will let you into a secret. Are you listening?"

"Yes."

"Well, five hundred miles from here, lies the old hulk of the *Esmerelda*, a vessel which was sunk in a battle. On board at the time of her sinking was over two millions of dollars in money, besides jewels of princely value. I want you to go and get that money."

"But how are we going to do it?" asked Bob.

"Don't interrupt me," impatiently said the sick man, "but listen quietly and I will tell you. Years ago I came to this island with the express intention of getting the *Esmerelda's* treasure. I wanted to get it alone, but every attempt I made from the result proved futile. This set me to thinking, and the result was that I built a boat to run under water.

"A boat to run beneath the surface," said Bob; "impossible."

"Shut up or I will," testily growled the old man, who, with his even now keen, gray, piercing eyes and long gray beard, seemed not unlike some wizard. "This boat," continued the old man, "I finished but a short time ago, and the natives of the neighboring islands (this one is uninhabited), unable to understand the strange craft that sometimes rises to the surface to deal destruction among them, have called her the *Demon*. To build her has cost me years and years of labor, but I freely give her to you on one condition."

"Name it," cried Bob, and I will accept it."

"It is this," and raising in bed, the old man pulled from beneath his pillow two rolls of manuscript, one tied with red tape, the other sealed. "Here are two manuscripts which I entrust to your keeping. This one tied with tape contains full and accurate information as to how the vessel is manipulated. The other is my life, my history. My condition is, that you are not to open or read it until with five hundred thousand dollars worth of treasure you reach the harbor of New York. Then I wish you to open it and obey its behests. Will you do it?"

"I will," replied Bob, in a tone and manner that convinced the old man of his sincerity.

There was a pause of a few minutes, during which Bob gave him another draught from the bottle, after which, in a quick, jerky voice, the old man, who evidently was fast nearing death, described the spot, where, in a cave partly natural and partly artificial, lay concealed the wonderful boat which he had constructed.

When he had finished describing the spot, he caused Bob to repeat what he had said to make sure that he would not go astray, then he continued:

"When I am dead—which will be very soon—bury me right here, inside this hut, and should ever anyone request it, I want you to come here after my body and deliver it to the person who makes the request. Can I rely on you in this?"

"You can. Have you anything else to tell me?"

"Nothing as concerns myself individually. But I have to caution you concerning a monster who has lately skirted the shores of this island," and the old man closed his eyes and involuntarily shuddered.

"What is it?" asked Bob, after waiting unsuccessfully for the old man to continue.

"A devil fish."

Bob had read of this terrible monster and shuddered as he thought of the possibility of coming into contact with it.

"Yes, 'tis a horrible, ghastly thing, and once within the embrace of the monster, death is certain, for should he not drag you down to a watery grave you must die because of the terrible crushing internally which his tentacles inflict. It is to him I owe my present position. I was on the shore, he saw me, but I did not him, until there was a wild swoop of one of his limbs and I found myself struggling within his folds. I escaped instant death, but—"

A wild look had gradually crept into the old man's eyes, he talked rapidly and incoherently a few moments, then wildly shrieked:

"I am dying—I am dying—I will balk you yet, you monster—oh! o-o-h-h! again I am in the grasp of the devil-fish—help! help! take that," and he made a stabbing movement at some invisible object. "I've failed, I am been crushed, this weight on my chest; help, help! away, away!"

With eyes almost bursting from their sockets and a look of fear inexpressible on his face, which told how terribly vivid must have been the imaginative scene with the frightful devil-fish, the old man rose up from his couch, grasped wildly and convulsively at the air, and sank back dead.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEVIL-FISH.

REVERENTLY they laid him down and closed his eyes, and later in the day they buried him, as he had requested, beneath the floor of the hut that for so many long years had been his home.

During the time that the old man was talking, Bob had believed his story, but now after he had time for reflection an incredulous smile began playing about his mouth.

"The old man was crazy," he thought to himself. "Such a vessel was never heard of—and cannot be."

So thinking, he did not start out toward the cave in which this craft was to be found, according to the

story, with any idea of success, he not daring to entertain but even the most vague hope that it might prove so.

He found the landmarks and guides until he should, as the old man said, be directly in front of the cave.

"I knew it must be the chimera of a diseased brain," thought Bob as he scanned the face of a mass of rock which rose perpendicularly to a height of two hundred feet, shaped into a semi-circle the base of one half being washed by the sea.

It was by this time growing dark, and they concluded to give up the search until the next morning.

They passed the night in the hut, and after satisfying their hunger the next morning with pickled turtle and some boiled turtle eggs, which they found in the larder of the hut, they started for the cliff.

Arrived there the boys found themselves in the same predicament which had encompassed them the day before—they could see nothing of any opening in the cliff, and it was not until by carefully feeling of it all the way along that Bob chanced to discover a narrow crevice that, although rock to appearance, was canvas to touch.

The old man had covered the opening, which was about two feet wide and five feet high, with canvas which he had painted to look so like the rock itself, that nought but touch alone could betray the fact.

"Yawpey," called Bob; "I've found it."

"Yah; I see," and Yawpey came shambling along toward Bob as he spoke.

They were obliged to stoop a little as they entered the passage, which, pursued a hundred feet or so, widened and heightened until they found themselves in a spacious chamber.

It was as dark as Erebus, and they dared not advance further until Bob had struck a match, which, when lighted, showed a clear way for some distance. Advancing further he noticed that it began lighting up, and shrewdly guessed that it was due to the refraction in the water of the light outside the cavern.

Presently he saw the water before him and outlined on its surface a gracefully-shaped, double-bowed boat, in the center of which rose up a circular pilot-house.

The sides were of glass, and, despite the semi-darkness, the brightly-polished steering wheel and the outlines of the strangely-constructed engine, could be seen flashing, as the water in rippling by threw little waves of light into the house.

The roof sloped from the center, and projected over the sides, thus affording a protection to the glass, while a jointed iron shutter, under control of the wheelman, rolled up beneath the eave of the roof, could be dropped or raised in an instant. This, however, was but seldom used, as the glass was sufficiently heavy to resist almost any force brought against it.

On top of the pilot-house was a huge lamp, and others of similar construction, but smaller, were placed one at each end.

"There's the boat," cried Bob, in exultant tone.

"Yah! I see," was Yawpey's sententious reply.

The stream was not more than fifteen or twenty feet broad, and the boat not over six or eight feet distant from where they stood, and was connected with the bank by a narrow plank.

Crossing it, Bob found himself on the vessel's deck, but despite his close examination, could discover no visible means of entrance.

He then thought of the manuscript, and drawing it from his pocket, he managed, by holding the paper near his eyes, to find a section which explained the mode of opening a door in the deck.

Following the instructions, he at length found a little knob, or screw-head, more properly speaking, pressing which caused one of the square iron plates which formed the deck to rise and then glide noiselessly back.

Before descending, he glanced again at the manuscript, then went slowly down stairs in the darkness.

He stepped a few feet to one side, when raising his hand, it encountered a lamp.

Drawing out a little knob or pull, connecting the battery with the lamp, the result was that instantly a brilliant light suffused the place.

Yawpey had followed when he saw the light, and both of the boys gave vent to exclamations of delight as they noted the completeness of the appointments.

A rich carpet covered the floor, and chairs both ordinary and easy stood about the apartment, in regular order.

This room, the largest on board, and situated next forward the pilot-house, Bob dubbed the parlor.

Forward of that, Bob after lighting another of the electric lights, discovered a room comfortably furnished and in the center of which a table stood, almost covered by a huge chart, while a compass, quadrant, and all else necessary for the safe navigation of a vessel was handy.

Forward of that again was a plain room, which Bob called the "battery" for, on a low, heavy iron table, which stood on glass insulators, was firmly fixed a huge electrical battery, from which ran numerous rods of brightly polished copper to the wheel-house where the engine was, the rods where they passed through the floor being guarded by glass throats.

Beyond the battery-room was a pair of stairs which descended into the hold where the ballast was stored, and where were a number of tight compartments, to be used for the storage of air.

Next he ascended to the pilot-house, and when he had looked at everything from the wheel to the engine, and from the latter to the pulls at the right hand side of the wheel which controlled it, by which he could start, stop, slow or back her, depress or raise her, his ecstasy knew no bounds.

"Tis perfect," almost gasped Bob. "Now for adventure, now for fun, hurrah," and he gave three hearty cheers which were echoed by Yawpey at the stern of the boat.

He had discovered back of the parlor a sleeping

apartment, containing two bunks, and abaft of that an elegant little *salon* containing a sofa, which if occasion required, could be used as a bed, and then descending a pair of stairs hung about with shining kettles and pans which fairly took his heart by storm.

They had brought no food and so were obliged to return to the hut, and as it was dark remained all night, Bob, meanwhile, diligently studying the manuscript describing her, and when he at last laid it aside, it was with a feeling of conviction that he could run this strange craft.

The next morning they were early at the cave, and Bob explored it in the direction of the sea while Yawpey went inland until he reached the spot where the subterranean stream came in.

An hour later they both boarded the *Demon*, and Bob ascended to the pilot-house while Yawpey cast off the slender line that held the craft to the bank.

Bob applied the electric spark to the lamp above the pilot, and the cavern was lighted up as by the noonday sun.

He next drew Pull No. 1—slowly and steadily.

An instant, and gently the *Demon* glided down the stream in the direction of the sea and toward what seemed an impenetrable wall, but which, nevertheless was reft where the mountain stream found passage to the old ocean beyond.

Bob slowed her when they came near this wall.

Slowly she approached it—her bow even touched it at last, but there came no shock, for this opening, which was only about three feet high, was covered as was the others, and pushing the canvas aside, the *Demon* glided into the waters beyond like a thing of life.

Bob stopped her immediately.

They were now in broad daylight, and leaving the pilot house, Bob walked aft and up on deck where Yawpey had stood. We say *had*, because he was there no longer. He had stood watching the boat approach the wall, and when she glided through the bow opening, he was swept from the deck. Bob saw him puffing and panting, at length appear from beneath the bluff.

He helped him on deck when he came near enough, and then descended to the main room, laughing to himself as he thought of Yawpey's woes and ludicrous appearance, as shaking himself somewhat after the fashion of a dog, he lugubriously said:

"Jumpin' Jehosapha—crackey—but the water's very wet."

Bob, on his way to the pilot house, stepped into the engine room.

He stopped suddenly as a terrible scream broke upon his ear.

"What can be the matter?" he questioned himself, darting down the steps and toward the middle room, as the horrified and blood-curdling cry rose sharply on the air.

"Help! help! quick!"

This he heard as he entered the middle room and he knew it must have come from on deck.

Up the steps he bounded, and oh! horrors—what sight was it he saw.

'Twas the devil-fish that the old man had warned them of and Yawpey was within its embrace.

It lay on the water close beside the *Demon*, while its long tentacles were sweeping wildly around, claspings convulsively as if seeking another victim.

Already was one of the tentacles entwined about Yawpey, and another was approaching swiftly.

"Help!" groaned the unfortunate lad.

Bob felt for his sheath-knife.

It was not in his belt.

He had left it below.

The eyes of the devil-fish seemed to have a lurid glare of satisfaction in them, as, when it tightened its grasp, Yawpey groaned repeatedly, and at last as the very life was being squeezed out of him, gave vent to one prolonged wail of terror and pain.

"My God, can I not help him," was the agonizing thought of Bob, as the terrible wail in whose depths were buried the accents of a wild despair, smote his ear.

He saw the handle of Yawpey's sheath-knife sticking from its case and a hope born of the desperate situation seized him.

He called to Yawpey to use his knife, but the lad's arms were pinioned by the grasp of the monster.

One moment Bob hesitated, and only one, then despite the danger, despite the terrible fate of the old man before his eyes, he rushed forward, and seized the hilt of Yawpey's knife.

He drew it from the sheath with his left hand and as he did so, a cold shiver ran through his frame.

The devil-fish had seized his hand.

He struggled wildly to escape.

He broke loose once, but it seemed as if the monster had allowed him to do so, just for the pleasure of seizing him again in a tighter embrace, for the tentacle seized him, gradually tightened, and he felt himself being drawn toward the horrible death he knew was in store for him should the monster succeed in pulling him from the deck.

His left arm was confined, and in that hand he held the knife.

The right was free but useless, having no weapon.

With a prayer for success he threw the knife toward his right hand and caught it by the blade making a deep gash.

At the same instant as if anticipating his intentions, the devil-fish seized his right arm above the elbow.

But one resource was left.

But one chance was left for life, and that one, oh! how slim.

He allowed that knife to slip down until he held by the point.

With an appeal for divine aid, he raised his arm as high as he could, took aim at one of the great, bulging, horrid eyes of the monster.

The next instant there was a succession of bright

flashes as the knife sped on its course, then a hoarse cry of agony, a tightening and a loosening of the tentacles that held the boys.

Then the sea assumed a bloody hue, the tentacles tightened again, while the others lashed the sea into a bloody foam, there was a swashing sound, and the terrible devil-fish disappeared beneath the water still holding in its embrace the two luckless boys.

CHAPTER V.

THE BANKER AND HIS CLERK.

Down, down, down went the two boys, still held in the ruthless embrace of the terrible devil-fish.

Down, until their ears began to sing.

Down, until tons seemed to be resting on their breasts.

Down, till they gasped convulsively for breath.

Down, until a cloud seemed settling on their brains shutting out the light of reason and life.

Then, at almost the last moment the monster, who had received his death-blow, the knife having, through the eye, penetrated a vital part, was convulsed in the throes of death.

The tentacles tightened and loosened spasmodically, finally relaxed their hold, and Bob and Yawpey felt themselves shooting upward toward the surface.

Bob was about half-unconscious when first his head arose above the water, still he had sense enough to strike out towards the *Demon* which lay a few hundred feet distant.

He reached her side and after clinging to it a moment to regain his breath, he drew himself up on deck.

Yawpey, meanwhile had come to the surface, but far too exhausted to swim a stroke, and so sank immediately.

As he arose again, Bob saw him.

Yawpey's face was towards him, and though he spoke not a word, the hand that was stretched appealingly out told the story of exhaustion and of his inability to place himself in safety.

Bob was well-nigh caved-in himself, and knew that, to attempt to save Yawpey was to imperil his own life, but his brave heart knew no fear, and he plunged in and struck out towards the spot where Yawpey had disappeared, arrived at which he peered eagerly into the water's depth, and presently his eyes were delighted with the sight of Yawpey's slowly-rising body.

It neared the surface, then stopped and would have descended.

The lad's eyes were wide open and much bulged beyond their normal condition, and through the water as Bob glanced at them, they seemed like two protruding balls of white, staring at him in fixed, ness.

Bob grasped Yawpey by the hair and drew him to the surface.

And then commenced a herculean task for one in Bob's condition.

But pluck is half of any battle, and being possessed of a goodly share of that article, Bob finally gained the day; and once beside the *Demon* with his senseless burden, he managed to clamber on deck and then draw up unconscious Yawpey.

Bob laid him down, and as he did so happened to glance at his eyes.

A violent start of surprise nearly threw him into the water, for in the glaring, staring eyes of the hapless youth was photographed the scene of the struggle with the devil-fish.

They were standing on the deck, the monster, with his wicked, devilish-lighted eyes, was glaring at them: they were gasping for breath, and circling in the air was the sheath knife speeding its way on the mission which Bob had sent it on.

Weak from loss of blood, the bringing back of the terrible scene was too much for Bob, and he sank beside Yawpey's body, half sitting, half reclining, in a dazed state.

Then he, by an effort of will, threw off the incubus, bound his handkerchief about his wounded hand, then turned Yawpey on his face, and, after some minutes' work, had the pleasure of hearing a moan issue from the lips of that individual: and a short time later, as he turned him on his back, Yawpey gasped a little and by a nod of his head signified that he was all right.

With a sort of horrible fascination Bob's eyes sought his.

Yes, the picture was there still, but slowly fading.

Bob went down stairs and procured a bottle of brandy which he had seen while rummaging in a closet in the parlor.

Returning, he gave Yawpey a swallow or two and then helped himself to about the same quantity.

The generous warmth which the brandy added to their blood made them both feel like new persons, and when Yawpey caught sight of Bob's bound up hand, and started to his feet, the picture had vanished from his eyes.

Yawpey, insisted upon being shown the cut, and together descended to the parlor, and from the closet whence Bob had procured the brandy his companion now took a small square box which contained a few simple remedies and some court-plaster.

Drawing the lips of the cut together Yawpey stuck the court-plaster on, and next bound the hand to relieve any straining of the cut apart.

Nearly a week passed by, during which Bob perfected his knowledge of the wonderful piece of mechanism, such as the *Demon* was beyond all cavil, while Yawpey, from the brook into which they had stumbled, after being thrown from the raft to the beach, filled her water tank.

This done and a supply of tinned meat and eggs having been laid in, and Bob's hand being far advanced

toward being perfectly sound, they determined to go to sea the next day at sunrise.

At sunrise all was in readiness.

The door on deck was closed and securely fastened from the inside, the rubber joints making it perfectly water-tight.

They both entered the pilot-house.

Bob took hold of the wheel—Yawpey assumed his position at the engine.

"All ready!" queried Yawpey.

"Yes. Let her go," replied Bob.

A twist of the wheel—the electric spark rushed rapidly along, the screw turned and away they glided.

"Turn on more," said Bob.

"Yah!" and Yawpey obeyed the command, and away they sped like an arrow from a bow.

"This is glorious," murmured Bob, more to himself than to his companion, who, however, could not let the favorable opportunity of putting in his favorite reply of "Yah" pass by.

"Faster!" cried Bob.

And faster they shot along, skimming the surface like a thing of life.

And Bob, seated at the wheel, gazing out into the ocean beyond, felt as happy as a king.

We must now retrace our steps to the morning after Bob's escape from Sing Sing.

Accompany us, reader, to the banking-house of William Drew, in Wall Street.

We pass in from the street to the hall, and, turning to the right, enter a door, which reveals the usual long counter of a banking-room, with a high wire-railing surmounting the top.

It is eleven o'clock, and the clerks are busily engaged paying out and receiving deposits.

At the back end of the banking-room is a door, the word "private" occupying a conspicuous position on it.

We, however, being privileged characters, intrude on this privacy, and see sitting beside a green-covered table, in the center of the room, a dark-featured man of perhaps some forty years of age.

He has just thrown down a copy of the *New York Herald*, and is chewing his heavy black moustache in a vexed manner.

Presently he jumps up, and commences pacing the room.

We thus discover that he is a short, slender man, weighing not over one hundred and twenty or thirty pounds.

"Darn it," he mutters, "the boy has escaped. It would have been better if Pat had did as I asked him to. Things have all gone wrong lately. I'll"—

He had stopped when thus muttering, then with bristling brows and clenched hands he resumed his walk.

And now while he is walking, let us glance over the paper and see what has occasioned these comments on Mr. David Brooks' part.

The leading of the column was:

"STILL ANOTHER."

"Again we have to chronicle an escape from our model prison, Sing Sing; last night at supper it was discovered that Bob Harris, sent there but a short while since, to serve out a life sentence for murder, had escaped."

Then followed a description of how the feat had been accomplished, and a long tirade concerning inefficiency of the prison officers.

Brooks was still pacing up and down the room when the private door was opened and a clerk ushered into his presence Pat Harris.

The latter instantly saw that Brooks had learned of the boy's escape still, as he he familiarly dropped into a chair he remarked:

"Well, he's gone."

"Yes, and it's all your fault. The lad should have been put out of the way, as I told you I wanted you to do," returned Brooks, scowling in an angry manner at Pat.

"Admit it," returned Pat. "what then?"

"Nothing, except that I have you to curse for this trouble. Do you know," he added, confidentially, "old man Drew for a long time past has been employing a detective to hunt up his sons, whom he still believes to be living. I wondered why he drew so much for private expenses; but now it is all plain. This detective somehow has spotted you, believing that you know all about the boys; so beware of yourself."

"How do you know this? Did the old man tell you this?" asked Pat.

"No; but I found out, and am satisfied of the truth of the story."

"Who is the detective?"

"Jim Devon."

"Phew!" whistled Pat, in some surprise and a little evident alarm. "That old fox?"

"Yes, so handle your cards carefully. We are playing a deep game. And now how is Joe?"

"He's all right."

"I want him put out of the way immediately, and want no mistakes about the matter."

"I'll attend to it right away."

"Meet me at nine o'clock to-morrow night at the old place, and then—yes, my good man, I do believe your story, and my heart is always open to the destitute. Here is a dollar, and I will call on you at your number, and inquire into your circumstances, and perhaps I may be able to aid you in getting work. Ah! down so early, Mr. Drew? Allow me to bid you good morning."

The sudden change in the tone of conversation had been caused by the entrance of Drew, upon which Pat had risen, and with an humble demeanor accepted the dollar, and with words of thanks on his lips bowed himself out.

"Who is that?" asked Mr. Drew, as the door closed behind Pat.

"A poor man, who has a destitute family."

"A rascally looking fellow—and I think your charity is wasted on him," returned the old gentleman.

"I hope not," replied Brooks, and then the confidential clerk, for such he was, detailed the business done to his employer.

Drew had been a foundling; but, by dint of hard work, had pushed himself along in the world; had married a portionless orphan girl, who died in giving birth to their second child.

Cold to all the world beside, at his fireside he was geniality and generosity itself; and when, a year after his wife's death, his two boys—one two-and the other one year of age—were stolen, his grief knew no bounds; but, when its first passion was over, he took his clerk, Brooks, more into his confidence than ever before, and it was understood that should his children never be recovered, that person would come into a goodly portion of the old man's wealth.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COLLISION—GRUMBLING JOE.

THERE had been a collision on the ——— Railroad, accompanied with a dreadful loss of life.

So came the dispatch to B——, about two miles distant from the scene of the disaster.

Doctor Banks immediately drove, post haste, to the spot, to alleviate, as much as possible, the pain which, necessarily, the poor victims must suffer.

Arrived on the ground, he entered into the work with a will, and it was needed, for the wounded and dying lay about him on all sides.

As he was passing around, a cooing sound caught his ear, and, glancing down, he saw, almost at his feet, a little black-eyed babe clasped in the arms of a woman who laid still and silent.

With a pitying exclamation the kind-hearted doctor took the babe from the arms, that, when released, dropped lifelessly to the poor woman's sides, and conveyed it to his carriage, where he made a bed for it among the cushions.

Returning to the spot, he found that others had been before him, and cared for the woman—be she living or dead.

Having assisted until long after nightfall the doctor thought it time to go home, and returned to his carriage.

He had totally forgotten the little stranger, who was brought forcibly to his mind when it commenced lustily crying when it saw him.

What should he do with it?

Take it home?

Heaven had never blessed him and his wife with any children—this child's mother was in all probability dead, and he had as much right to it as any one else.

So reasoned the doctor, and home he took the babe, which his wife received with many expressions of joy.

On the golden armlets, of curious design, was the name Margrette, and by this name, shortened into Retta, she was called.

She grew apace, and they, the doctor and his wife, loved her as well as if she had been their own.

Finally Mrs. Banks died, but Retta had learned to be a good little housekeeper, albeit she was as wild as a young hare—hoydenish—those who disliked her called her.

She was a first-rate shot with a revolver, could swim, row, play ball, and prided herself on being able to vanquish a great number of the young men of her acquaintance in such sports as she could compete with them in.

It was generally understood that whatever the doctor was worth should be hers at his death.

This excited the envy of the doctor's relatives, who considered her as an intruder; so when the good old doctor was suddenly taken off, leaving no will to that effect, they quickly intimated that her presence was an interpolation.

Proud and sensitive to the highest degree, the girl glanced scornfully at the little band who had gathered to dispute about the disposition of the doctor's effects ere his body was hardly cold in the ground, and ascending to the little room she so long had occupied, she gathered together a little bundle, and shaking the dust of the house from her feet, she crossed the inhospitable threshold, and passed out into the world.

What should she do? she questioned herself as she trudged along the dusty road toward the railroad station.

Should she go to New York?

Yes.

But on examination she found she had not sufficient money to pay her fare; and then, after a moment's thought her independent spirit caused her to form the resolution to walk the distance.

She set bravely out, but ere nightfall, was foot-sore and weary.

When she applied at a farm-house for shelter she was rebuffed; why? because of her sex.

She wondered at the insult that the farmer's wife put upon her, but tried again and fared no better.

She slept outdoors that night and proceeded on her way the next morning, determined to push her own way in the world.

Other and ordinary girls would have acted differently; but Retta was not such, and once having learned the reason of the rebuff she had met with, she sought the remedy and found it in the cutting off of her long jet black hair, and the donning of a suit of boy's clothes and dressed in this disguise she tramped into the great city.

She was now free from insult at least, but she found that it was not so easy to push her way in the world as she had imagined.

At last her little stock of money was exhausted, she had nothing to eat for almost twenty-four hours. She wandered into the Battery Park and set down. A faintness seized her, and with a gasp her head fell back and she felt herself floating away as it were in the air.

She felt a hand grasp her by the arm the next moment and shake her roughly.

It partially roused her and looking up, she seemed to see through a sort of grayish haze, a boyish figure.

A wet handkerchief placed on her face recalled her to her senses, and to the boy, who was a reality, she returned her thanks for his assistance.

"What's the matter?" asked the boy. "Hungry? Almost starved?"

"Yes."

"Well, here's some crackers, I'll share with you. I run away from home to-day and brought them with me."

She seized the crackers he offered, and devoured them hastily and with a great relish.

"Who are you?" asked the boy, after she had swallowed the last mouthful. "What's your name?"

Prepared for such an emergency, she quickly rejoined:

"Ben Bolt."

"And mine's Joe Black—Grumbling Joe, the folks used to call me. Now what are you going to do?"

"I don't know—and you?"

"I'm in the same predicament. What do you say to going to sea, that is together. I like you."

"So do I you, and I'll go if you will."

"It's a bargain," said Grumbling Joe, grasping Ben's hand and shaking it heartily.

A ship with sails spread lay off the Battery, and toward that their wishful gaze was directed, when a voice asked:

"Would one of you youngsters like to go aboard that ship as cabin boy?"

"No, sir," replied the Grumbler promptly and decidedly. "But if you take us both, we'll go."

"Ever been to sea before, either of you?"

"No, sir," both replied.

"Can't take you both, but stop, let me see," and he reflected a moment, then said: "Which one of you will be cabin boy?"

"He will," replied Joe, pointing at Ben. "He's youngest, and not used to hard work."

"Do you agree?" asked the captain of Ben.

"Yes, sir."

"We'll consider it a bargain then, for you're both lively-looking, active cusses. Come along, here's the boat."

They were soon sitting side by side in the stern of the long boat, which darted, under the influence of six pairs of stalwart arms which the tough tars bent to the task, toward the very ship whose sails were spread, as if anxious to get away from Gotham.

The anchor was heaved up as soon as the party reached the deck, and then with a nice breeze to wait them along, the *Stanwix* bowled merrily down the Narrows, and toward the great Atlantic.

Accompany us now for a brief space of time to the elegant home of William Drew, on Fifth Avenue, near Thirty-sixth Street.

We enter from the street, pass up a spacious hall and staircase to the floor above, then back through that hall toward the street, until we are ushered into a sumptuously-furnished library.

An elegant book-case filled with the choicest literature occupies one whole side of the room, while other evidence of the occupant's taste is scattered lavishly about.

Mr. Drew, a prematurely old man, is sitting by a table, his elbow resting on it, his hand supporting his head.

Evidently he is in a reverie.

But he straightens up, and a sigh escapes his lips as the door-bell peals forth, informing him of some one seeking him.

A card is brought up by the servant.

He glances at it, and bids the servant show the gentleman up.

The visitor, a man perhaps of thirty-five or forty, with shaggy eyebrows, and far projecting brows, under which, in a deep recess as it were, shine a pair of steely-gray eyes, at once impressed you with an idea of shrewdness.

And shrewd he is, and smart as—to use an old simile—a steel trap.

This is the noted detective, Jim Devon.

"Thank you," replied the detective, sinking into a chair on the opposite side of the table. "I came to-night to inform you, that I shall have to suspend search for your boys for a month or two."

"Why?" demanded Drew, just a little bit irately.

"Don't I pay you enough?"

"Yes; but I am obliged to go where the department sends me, nevertheless, and to-day I received orders to leave the city."

"Leave the department—devote your time to my service and I will make it pay you."

"I am sorry, but it is impossible under the circumstances. I don't want to raise any false hopes in your breast, Mr. Drew, but I have been sent after a murderer, a man whom I believe is in some way connected with the disappearance of your children. Should I succeed in capturing him, I feel sure that I can solve the mystery that envelopes your children."

"When do you go?"

"To-morrow, on the *Stanwix*. She touches first at a foreign port, and then departs on an expedition for the purpose of raising the treasure which went down with the old Spanish ship *Esmeralda*. It is the same project which some years ago John Berry went crazy over."

"I remember," said Mr. Drew, musingly. "Well, Mr. Devon, I trust all to you. Bring me back my boys and fifty thousand dollars will be your reward. Good-night."

"Good-night and good-bye," returned the detective, as he left the room.

And the next day when the *Stanwix* sailed Jim Devon accompanied her as a passenger.

CHAPTER VII.

ON BOARD THE "DEMON."

THE *Demon* worked magnificently, and Bob, in his exuberance felt as if he would like to join Yawpey in cutting up tricks and didoes, such as prancing around wildly, standing on his head, turning cart-wheels, and the like.

"Hurroo, Bob, but aren't this splendiferous," ejaculated Yawpey. "Ha! ha! ha! what'd the folks at Luggers' Pond say to us now—Yawpey Dick engineer of the great original and bully boy ship *Demon*," and he laughed heartily, his wide open mouth, opened to its fullest extent, forming a cavern of no mean dimensions.

They were gliding along at a splendid rate, and Yawpey's enthusiasm was not misplaced.

"Turn on more," ordered Bob.

The jaws, which seemed to work on a spring, closed with a snap, the inevitable "Yah," escaped his lips, his hand sought the lever, and faster than ever the *Demon* ploughed the water.

Thus they pursued their way all day long, both so entranced with the situation as to totally forget the necessity of eating, of which they both now began to be reminded by a gnawing sensation in the region of their stomachs.

Upon an order from Bob to that effect, Yawpey descended to the kitchen, and in a short time returned with some smoking hot stew, composed of turtle meat and eggs, thickened with mushrooms which they found on the island, and sea biscuit.

On this Bob made an excellent meal, washing it down with water.

Supper over, they determined on taking a view of the deep, and the electric lights having been lighted, every thing was in readiness for the descent, which was effected by forcing the air out of two huge air-chambers, one in each end of the boat, and allowing them to fill with sea water.

"Are the lights all right?"

"Yah."

"Then stand by your engine. Slow down—easy, now. Keep her so."

One more glance at the manuscript he always kept near him, and Bob's hand sought the pull-board and slid along until his fingers were hooked in "Pull 4."

There arose a throbbing sound as the exhaust-pump threw the air from the chambers.

A slide connecting with the sea opened, and as the water filled in the *Demon* slowly sank beneath the surface.

After descending some distance, Bob let go of the pull, and the vessel remained suspended in the water, still slowly moving forward.

The huge, electric light on top of the pilot-house lighted up the water as by the noonday sun, and a queer sight is revealed.

Darting hither and thither, startled by the strange light, and seeking to escape from within the radius of its glare, were thousands of the denizens of the deep, some familiar in shape and size, others strange and horrid-looking, with eyes protruding far enough from frightful heads to be swept in any direction.

One fearful-looking monster had eyes situated at the end of an antenna several feet from its body, and these being flexible, the oddity could swing them around to right or left, gaze under or over his body; while another, with perfectly round back, which seemed studded with eyes, had suspended from the lower part of his body a fringe of tentacles much the same as those of the devil-fish.

"Look, look!" cried Yawpey, pointing in wild excitement first in one direction and then another. "How ugly they are—ugh!" and a shudder convulsed his frame.

He paused and turned toward Bob, and the latter again saw Yawpey's eyes glaring, and their retina was shadowing forth the picture of their terrible struggle and narrow escape at the island.

Bob had heard of such phenomena before, but now he beheld it before him in startling, vivid reality.

And thus it ever was as long as he lived.

When in an excited, nervous state, there was reflected in his eyes that terrible picture.

Bob turned away from Yawpey and kept an eye out ahead, and well it was that he did so, for they came so suddenly upon a rise in the bottom of the sea that had she not been promptly backed the boat would have run aground.

Finally, tired out, Bob sunk the *Demon* until she rested on a level plateau, and then both boys went to bed and slept, dear reader, as soundly and as sweetly beneath the great waste of waters rolling above them as do you in your own homes and beds.

When they awoke in the morning, the air from being confined was heated and laden with the impurity of their breaths, still by admitting fresh air from reservoirs constructed for that purpose it was soon made wholesome.

Altogether they had sufficient air to exist under water for three or four days without suffering any particular inconvenience.

They had breakfast, after which Bob proposed to go outside for a walk and a search for a tidbit in the shape of some fish.

Yawpey assented, and Bob brought out from a locker two suits of diving armor differing only from that used by divers in the fact that each suit contained a

great square knapsack on the back which contained fresh air.

And under the arm was an oblong, thick rubber article, which, being pressed somewhat in the bag-pipe style, forced the air into the huge helmet from the knapsack.

Thus equipped the boys opened a door of a perfectly air and water-tight chamber, just large enough to contain them and closed the door; then Bob, turned on the exhaust-pump, a door in the side of the vessel opened and as the air was withdrawn the water filled in, and in a few moments they were surrounded by the sea.

They stepped outside on the plateau, and their feet, which when inside it was barely possible to drag along, so heavily weighted with lead were they, now seemed light as feathers, and indeed seemed inclined to slip from under them at the slightest provocation.

Their weapons for defense or capture, of game were two peculiarly constructed knives—the blade being in the hilt, at the end of which was a small projection, which, being pressed, sent out the long, keen blade with lightning-like rapidity.

This was necessary, as at that depth the free use of an ordinary knife would be prevented by the weight and density of the water.

As they wandered around here and there, they startled many curious-looking specimens of the submarine world from their lairs.

Bob was in ecstasy

This was living indeed.

To set at defiance the ordinary modes of terrestrial life, and wander around the bottom of the sea with countless myriads of strange beings and sights continually coming and going, 'twere a life for a king.

So thought Bob as he stood at the edge of the little plateau and tried to fathom the depth beneath him, which was formed by the precipice on whose brink he stood.

But they had come out intending to hunt for something that would form food; and a huge sea-turtle Bob just at that moment happened to discover, head and feet drawn within its shell, quietly sleeping in a little hollow.

Turning, he held up his hand as a sign for Yawpey, who responded by coming immediately to Bob's side, when the latter pointed at the turtle, intimating by dumb show that they must capture it.

Yawpey started slowly and finally edged about until he stood in the rear of the turtle, about four or five feet distant.

With his knife ready, he commenced to slowly advance, intending to step on it, and, as the head appeared from the shell, to send the sharp razor-like blade through it.

But man proposes, God disposes.

As Yawpey took the second or third step he slipped—turned half way round—and fell, landing back down on the top of the turtle.

Thus suddenly aroused, perhaps from slumber sweet, from pleasant dreams, like a flash came forth the turtle's head.

Yawpey's helmet projected over in front.

Antagonistic to the highest degree, the turtle's jaws snapped together, opened again, the neck was stretched forth, and when they closed again they held between them a portion of Yawpey's helmet.

Then the legs shot out, and Bob, who had stood a spellbound spectator of this transitory scene, helpless to avert the catastrophe, saw the turtle dart like a flash, bearing Yawpey with him.

Yawpey was another Mazeppa, except that his steed was a turtle instead of one of the equine race.

Over the precipice the turtle glided, and in an instant had disappeared in the depths of the gloomy abyss.

With an inward groan Bob sank down.

"Yawpey was gone," was the thought that flashed again and again through his brain. "Gone to a horrible death—gone—gone—and all my fault. I should not have sent him to capture the creature who has now taken his life. Verily that craft is a demon, and already have two lives been sacrificed to her. But cannot I rescue him?"

The question seemed an idle one, yet it infused new life to the lad, and he speedily placed himself on his feet and gazed in the direction which the turtle had taken.

But all was dark, all was blackness and gloom before him.

"If I had a light," he thought, "I could, perhaps, find him."

Presently, animated by an idea the birth of thinking of a light, he hurried towards the *Demon*. Quickly he entered, closed the door, forced the water out and the air in, opened the door to the inside of the vessel, threw back his helmet and rushed to the pilot-house.

Back of the large electric light was a concave reflector.

This he quickly adjusted into position, and then with the blood seething in painful anxiety through his brain, and high-beating heart, he raised the *Demon* a little and started her.

When she had cleared the precipice he lowered her and slowed her down until she barely moved.

The lamp, focused as it was, threw a broad penetrating stream of light ahead, rendering the smallest objects visible.

With strained and eager gaze he scanned the crannied bottom.

At last—yes—no—yes—he saw the body of Yawpey.

He guided the *Demon* close by, dropped her to the bottom, rearranged the helmet of his armor, bounded to the exit chamber, with feverish fingers set the pumps to work, and a moment later stepped out but a few feet distant from the unfortunate Yawpey.

To draw the body inside was but an instant's work, to close the sea-door another, and breathing heavily a

short while later, Bob threw back his own helmet, and then opened that of his companion.

Yawpey lay still and white, apparently dead.

But Bob found his heart still beating although faintly. The next thing to be done was to get him warmed up. He pried open the resisting lips and allowed some brandy to gurgle down his throat. Then rolled him in blankets, after removing his clothing, and half an hour later had the satisfaction of feeling that his exertions were rewarded, for Yawpey began breathing regularly, and a short while later opened his eyes.

As he saw Bob bending over him, an amused smile flitted across his features followed by a hearty laugh, as he said:

"Yah! I see—Yawpey's all right—thought I was in purgatory, and didn't dare open my eyes for fear of seeing the old chap himself. Yah! Yawpey's all right," and despite Bob's remonstrances, he struggled to his feet and restored his clothing to his body.

A few days passed without anything of note occurring, when after lying on the surface with lights burning all night long, the boys on arising found themselves the subject of inspection from the deck of a low, rakish-looking vessel scarce a quarter mile distant, who was standing toward them.

"I'll show them my heels," quoth Bob, now thoroughly entranced again with the *Demon*, and forthwith her engine was started.

Although the vessel was a fast sailer, Bob could have easily ran away from her; but he wished to see what they could do, and so barely maintained the same distance from her.

Several hours were consumed in this manner, when Bob, who had been paying more attention to his pursuer than his course, saw the latter come up suddenly in the wind, and pay off sharply on another tack.

"Given it up, I guess," said Bob, sarcastically, to Yawpey, who, too, had watched the race, if such it may be called, with interest.

"Yah."

Meanwhile the *Demon's* speed seemed to accelerate to some extent, and Bob was puzzled as to the reason, and was wondering to what it was due, when glancing ahead, he saw that which explained all, and another terrible sight it was.

The sea, not many hundred feet ahead, appeared as if lashed into a fury; and great, white-capped, foamy waves were dashing at each other, to meet and break, to rush back and dart forward again. And in the center the water was running around in a circle, with scarcely a ripple on its surface.

There was a loud gurgling sound as the waters were drawn forward and sucked down—down—who knows where?

It was the maelstrom of the South Seas!

All this Bob took in at a glance.

He stopped the boat, and backed her with all the power she had, but they were within the mighty grasp of the remorseless whirlpool, and rapidly the current into which they had struck bore them on to inevitable destruction.

With a hope born of desperation, Bob seized "Pull 4," drew it; the *Demon* sank below the surface.

"Were they safe?"

No; the angry maelstrom was not to be cheated, for the next moment the *Demon* was seized by an irresistible current, which bore her swiftly down—down—until it seemed to Bob that the center of the earth must have been reached.

Then, still held in the resistless power of water, they were swept through an archway, and were then carried along with lightning-like speed through a narrow and water-worn tunnel.

The water seethed and boiled; the roar was deafening, as the current forced it through narrow openings which lined the tunnel on both sides.

The electric lights displayed a scene of terror.

Above, beneath, and on either side were black, shiny walls, with projections here and there which threatened each moment to carry away the lights.

The iron shutter, to protect the glass, Bob dropped as soon as he recovered from the first shock occasioned by their entrance into the terrible trap.

"Is there an opening at the end?" Bob thus questioned himself.

He fondly hugged the hope that there was to his breast, as he gazed out of the front of the pilot-house.

Almost the same instant the cry, "God help us!" escaped his lips, and Bob sank to the floor in a swoon.

The end of the tunnel was of solid rock, and they were rushing toward it.

This much Bob had seen, and, with this cry on his lips, had swooned away, all hope of life gone!

CHAPTER VIII.

WORKING FOR LIFE.

We left the *Demon* held in the grasp of an irresistible current, being hurried on toward the solid rock which barred the end of this underground tunnel.

The *Demon* rushed on, and to Yawpey, who, when Bob, overpowered by the sight, fell with senses benumbed to the floor, total annihilation seemed inevitable.

On, on, nearer the black shiny mass, lighted up by the electric lights, the *Demon* pushed.

Bob rallied immediately upon Yawpey's grasping him by the shoulder and shaking him, and side by side they stood, waiting for the momentarily expected shock which would demolish their vessel and consign them to a watery grave.

A shock came, but not that of striking against the rock, which, however, was scarcely more than ten feet distant. It was a shock caused by a counter current which met them, and then separated, rushing off with a tremendous noise into the dark galleries on either side.

This tunnel was not unlike the main gallery of a coal mine, with numerous smaller ones stretched away in all directions.

The two boys were stupefied by this sudden and unexpected event, and as they gazed ahead with shudders of dread at the rock which shut them in to meet an unknown fate, a feeling of thankfulness arose from their hearts that at least immediate danger was averted.

As to what eventually might happen Bob dared not think of.

They were inclosed on all sides by rock, or virtually so, since they could not go back through the tunnel and against the fierce tide that had swept them along to this recess in the bowels of the earth.

It would in all probability form the sepulchre in which the *Demon* would be forever interred, and the bones of Yawpey and himself would lie and bleach in this same natural tomb, far away from the toil and bustle of the world, far away from human scrutiny.

Thus thought Bob, despite his efforts to repress it. Already they had faced death, and neither of the boys were cowards, still it was dreadful to think of the terrible death which awaited and seemed so absolutely to encompass them.

At the outside they could exist three or four days only on the amount of air contained in the *Demon*, and already it had been confined four or five hours.

How frightful it was to think of this and calculate how many hours of life remained, we leave to the reader's imagination.

And yet this was what Bob did.

He calculated they could live eighty hours yet—no more.

Neither had spoken, but had stood in the same position, side by side, a lethargy seeming to have seized their physical powers.

At last Bob broke the silence that had been maintained between them.

"Yawpey, we are doomed. We are enclosed in a living tomb, from which escape is impossible," said Bob, solemnly.

"Yah," was Yawpey's usual assenting answer. "That am a fac'."

Hours passed by, and all that either had done besides watching the currents eddy and circle, and seethe and dash away into the side galleries, was when Bob used "Full 4" and sank the *Demon* until she nestled on the rough bottom of the tunnel.

Hunger's pangs at length assailed them so fiercely that a stupor, which had settled over them, was thrown off, and Yawpey prepared some food. This was placed on the table, and on the end Yawpey, who had taken private pull from the brandy-flask, afterwards placed it.

Hunger satisfied Bob, feeling the need of something invigorating, took a few swallows of what was rare, old genuine brandy.

It infused new life in his veins, and with this new feeling came a wild, vagile hope that even yet they might find a way out of their danger, might elude the grim monster—death.

Another draught from the flask and the hope grew stronger.

Another, and success was assured.

Yawpey, meanwhile, had not been backward in indulging and both boys had now arrived at that period which might be turned jubilant and a little foolish.

"This is adventure, Yawpey, hey?"

"Yah!"

"With a vengeance."

"Yah!"

"The old man with the horns and hoofs wants us, Yawpey, and thinks he has cornered us, hey?"

"Yah!"

"Let's bilk the old cuss," suggested Bob, rising to his feet, on account of feeling a little shaky, using the table to help him up and support him afterward.

"What do you say?"

"Yah!" came Yawpey's monotonous reply, a joyful, hopeful ring pervading it; "but how?"

"Dunno," replied Bob. "Let's put on our suits, and go on a scouting expedition."

Yawpey's last adventure, when in the suit, did not prepossess him in its favor, and had he been perfectly sober (for he was not at the present moment) he would probably not have assented to Bob's proposition; but, fired by the liquor he had drank, he hailed the suggestion as a good one, and so far forgot his traditional reply as to exclaim:

"By the jumpin' Jehosaphat, but yer a brick, Bob, and if that old cuss as you spok of gits me on this deal, call me a slabsided piece of salt pork from Yankee-land, spread with molasses, fried in a spittoon and served as a sandwich between two pieces of bed-slat."

And having delivered himself of this long speech, and feeling somewhat enervated and exhausted by it, he seized the flask, and soon the last of its contents went gurgling down his throat.

He was the leader now, and struggling to his feet a minute or two later, he cried in a husky voice:

"Come on, Bob, let's explore zis darned devil's trap, and bust it to bla-z-z-es."

Yawpey was drunk—unmistakably and gloriously so, and for that reason we can pardon his swearing—the only instance which ever came to the knowledge of the author of his using profane language.

The liquor, too, had mounted into Bob's head, and he had all he could do to navigate with certainty of his foot coming down where he intended it to.

Under ordinary circumstances Bob would not have touched the liquor, for he detested it, and a drunken man above all things.

Still, under the circumstances, the brandy had done a good work—it broke the apathy to their surroundings which had previously hung over them.

They arrayed themselves in the diving armor, entered the exit chamber, set the air pumps in motion,

and when the sea-door glided open they stepped outside.

Side by side they stumbled along over the uneven bottom until they reached the bows of the *Demon*. Here they paused before venturing into the swiftly-gliding current, which might have carried them—who knows where?

Bob ventured a few feet further, but feeling the weight of the current to be too strong, he carefully backed down.

The *Demon* lay, as it were, in a still-pool, between the opposite currents, which did not meet, but rushed away in the before-mentioned galleries on either side of the main one, thus accounting for what would otherwise be a strange phenomenon.

Bob and Yawpey explored this still portion of the water, but found nothing in their exploration to bolster their hopes of "bilking the old cuss."

Motioning Yawpey to follow, Bob returned to the *Demon*, after having been out about three quarters of an hour, which nearly exhausted the life-giving principle of the air which their knapsacks held.

The effect of the cold water striking through the armor had removed partially the effects of the liquor, but not so much as not to leave a stern determination in the minds of both to work valiantly for life.

They opened their helmets, rested awhile, then more leaden weights were attached to their feet, their knapsacks were refilled with the atmosphere inside the *Demon*, which itself was now becoming heavy and fetid.

Then out into the sea again they went.

With the extra weight attached to their feet, they found that by care they might venture into the current in front.

They followed one side of the tunnel up to the wall that blocked their way in front.

A narrow gallery ran parallel with it, and the boys followed it a few feet, when they discovered a narrow opening at right angles with the gallery, pointing in the same direction that did the *Demon*.

Down this a few feet and again it turned sharply to the left.

They followed it still, and a few moments later Bob calculated that they were standing directly in front of the *Demon*, not over twenty-five or thirty feet distant, and that a wall of rock, perhaps four or five, possibly eight or ten feet in thickness, formed the veil that screened her from their gaze.

They had stood facing this rocky veil.

Turning squarely about Bob could see a continuation of the main gallery, but how far it continued before being again blocked was a mystery he could not solve, as the light was but very dim, and it required a straining of the gaze to see anything.

Still the fact of there being any light at all, to Bob's reflective mind, seemed to prove that beyond them the way was clear.

But why should this huge rock separate these two tunnels, which, as Bob supposed, were directly opposite each other, but which idea was wrong, the newly discovered portion of it being some feet to the left of that in which the *Demon* was lying.

The answer is an easy one, and one that can be explained by perfectly natural causes.

This huge mass of rock or mountain was a perfect honeycomb of galleries, and those lying east and west, in the path of the tides, were worn larger by the water which had rushed through them for centuries, gradually forcing their way ahead through the solid stone by the power of friction.

Left alone for another century, and the probabilities are that this veil that now interposed would by that time be entirely obliterated, and the two main galleries would be one.

"If this rock was only out of the way," thought Bob. "If it was—liberty would be ours, death would be defeated."

If—a small word in itself, but oh! at times how much it may express.

"If," bitterly thought Bob. "No, nothing can be done, and a miserable death awaits us, death in the most horrible shape."

Despondency in its most radical shape had seized him, when suddenly on the tablets of his memory stood out those words, a portion of the manuscript received from the hermit:

"It may be necessary in searching for the treasure on board the *Esmerelda* to employ some explosive force, for the purpose of rending her apart. For that I have provided nitro-glycerine, which can be found, hermetically sealed, in a locker in the stern, where I placed it so as to keep it from danger of ignition by lights, shocks, etc."

At the moment when everything seemed darkest lights had sprung forth.

"Why not blow down this barrier?" questioned Bob of himself.

The practicability of doing this was rapidly gone over in his mind. At any rate, it was a last resort, and was worthy of a trial.

He could not there ventilate his ideas for Yawpey's benefit, so they returned again to the *Demon*.

They had now been prisoners in this place for over forty hours, during which the boys had had no sleep; and so, after telling Yawpey of his idea, the tired out boys, although they sought to keep awake, at last thought it best to take a few hours' sleep, after which Bob felt that they would be better able to undertake the task of blowing down the obstruction.

It might seem as if it were impossible to sleep while in so great danger: but a wakefulness of over forty hours and the soporific effects of a quantity of liquor in its reaction on the brain as it passes off, will speedily convince anybody to the contrary.

Hours passed—far greater in number than Bob had intended, and still the boys slept peacefully on, the air, as each hour passed on—each minute, in fact—

becoming more heavy and affording less that would support life.

Bob awoke at last, the heavy air causing a weight, as if it were, to rest on his chest, while each respiration caused him an effort; while glancing at Yawpey, he saw that individual, with mouth wide open, endeavoring by the quantity of effete air he was inhaling to satisfy the clamorings of nature for pure oxygen.

Bob awoke him.

With a bound Yawpey was on his feet.

"We have been imprudent, Yawpey," said Bob. "We have slept too long, and God only knows whether this air will support life another two hours. Come, we must get the nitro-glycerine."

They descended together to the kitchen, and from thence passed into the *Demon's* hold.

Away back to the right-hand side, built against the air-chamber, they discovered a small locker, which had hitherto escaped notice when they had examined this portion of the vessel.

Handling it with the utmost circumspection, Bob carried it to the "parlor," set it down on the table, sat down himself, and dropping his forehead into his hand, strove to remember all of the characteristics of this dangerous compound which he had ever heard of.

Then he arose with a haggard face, which, in every lineament betokened how acutely he recognized each little detail of the terrible situation he occupied.

If he exploded the glycerine, as he was necessarily compelled to do, in such crannies of the rock as he could find, it might or it might not effect the purpose intended; or again, might as effectually compass their destruction as that of the rock, for they were but a few feet from it.

With a strained voice he bade Yawpey put on his armor, and assumed his own.

They left the *Demon* again, approached the rocky wall, and in numerous little crevices and pocket or cup-shaped recesses, Bob distributed the explosive material.

A coil of wire that he had brought with him was unwound, the end fastened to a jutting rock, and then laid in such a manner, bent and twisted, until it connected with all the deposits of the glycerine.

This done, they started to return, and although they had not been outside over fifteen minutes, so foul had been the supply of air brought with them, that when they reached the *Demon*, and were safely inside with helmets unloosed, they both sank to the floor, gasping for breath and utterly exhausted.

It required some minutes to recuperate sufficiently to rise to their feet; but the dread thought of death spurred them up and to work.

Bob raised the *Demon*, and pulled No. 3 fully out, causing her powerful engine to reverse rapidly.

Slowly the *Demon* retreated from the rock, until reaching the more powerful portion of the current, her engine was unsufficient to overcome it, and here she rested.

They had conducted the wire into the exit chamber, and from this point one of them had to apply the electric spark that was to be their salvation or speedy death.

Bob explained it in as few words as possible to Yawpey, leaving it to the latter to decide who should go.

"You understand handling her better than I do," said Yawpey a few minutes later, turning his pale, resolute face toward Bob, "I'll go."

"God help you."

"Amen," was Yawpey's fervent response.

He entered the chamber after all preparations had been made.

The door closed behind him, and Bob mounted into the pilot-house.

He kept the engine reversing so as to keep as far as possible from the scene of the explosion.

A moment passed.

Another.

With dreadful anxiety he waited, and then, before he could comprehend it, came a rapid report, a rumbling—low and sullen—a shock as a flying fragment of rock struck the vessel—then quietness.

Eagerly he looked out—the rock was gone—the way was clear.

He stopped the engine and darted down to the door, through which Yawpey soon appeared.

Tearing loose the helmet, Bob cried, in hopeful, joyful accents:

"The way is clear—we have a chance for life."

The door was quickly closed, they darted back as fast as they could go to the pilot-house, her engine was started, while Bob, at the wheel, guided her through the gap in the rock which the glycerine had made, and turning a little to the right the *Demon* entered the tunnel.

"Faster—for life—for air," cried Bob, and Yawpey, who had assumed charge of the engine, turned on full power, and away the *Demon* sped.

The current was against her, but she overcame it and after battling with it for nearly an hour she shot out into the open sea.

Out came No. 5 to its full extent—there came a pulsing and throbbing as she was lightened of the water and deserting the wheel and engine the boys left the pilot-house, and weakened by breathing the foul air, almost staggered along to the parlor.

Up the stairway Bob clambered.

They had reached the surface, as he knew by the ceasing of the pulsations and the smooth, onward progress of the vessel.

He seized the pin that held the door in the deck, and with the last remains of his strength drew it.

The door glided back—the blue sky of heaven was above them.

A moment later both boys were lying prone on the deck gulping in great mouthfuls of God's delicious air. Verily, they had worked for life.

CHAPTER IX.

JIM BLACK.

As agreed between David Brooks, Mr. Drew's confidential clerk, and Pat Harris, they met at the appointed time at a low drinking-saloon kept by Jim Black, a croney of Pat's.

After they were closeted together in a back room, Brooks asked:

"Well, have you taken any steps towards putting Joe out of the way?"

"Not yet: but Jim and me are going on a little fishing excursion in a few days and the Grumbler is to go along. He'll fall overboard accidentally—you know—and no one'll be the wiser."

"I hate delays—they are dangerous," said Brooks.

"It's the best we can do, and it's the safest and surest."

"Well, well, have your own way, only see that the boy don't live too long."

"No fear of his being above ground one week from to-day," said Pat, with a leer, and their conversation drifted away into other villainous channels, Pat's portion of it being freely interlarded with low oaths and vile language.

But Joe was above ground a week later despite Pat Harris' words, for that individual had in the meantime, and before the fishing party came off, become involved in a bar-room muss, during which, finding himself worsted, he drew a revolver and shot his opponent, who fell at his feet—dead.

He was terribly frightened at the result of his shot, probably not intending that it should have this fatal ending; nevertheless, it was murder, and realizing how little was the mercy he could expect at the hands of a jury, he looked about him with a defiant manner, cowed with threatening words and his brandished revolver those who would have stayed his progress; and as a policeman, drawn by the pistol shot, entered the front door, Pat darted out of the back, scaled the fence, entered another yard, darted through the hallway to the street beyond, and found refuge for a few hours in the home of an old pal, who that night, with Pat in disguise, accompanied him to one of New York's wharves.

A yawl was in readiness, and a short time later Pat was on board a vessel lying in the stream, on whose books he was enrolled under a fictitious name.

This pal was one of a class sometimes called "scalpers," or "seamen's boarding-house runners," who make a business of robbing Jack, or of getting Jack drunk, or drug him, and ship him in this condition on board some vessel that has failed to secure her complement of men, and whose captain, perhaps being anxious to sail, will even stoop to this means of securing hands.

He had that afternoon agreed to ship a man that night, and so all that was necessary for Pat Harris to do was simulate drunkenness, which he did to perfection, taking care not to recover from his supposed spree and appearing on deck until the vessel was out to sea.

David Brooks heard with regret of Pat's forced absence, for he had proved a valuable ally.

But the Grumbler, as they had dubbed Joe from a habit of grumbling when anything did not suit him, must be disposed of, and he offered Jim Black, Joe's nominal father, a handsome "stake" if the boy should suddenly become missing.

Joe had put up with many hardships, and when some few days after Pat Harris absconding, Jim Black gave him a terrible whipping, he went to the closet shortly after unperceived, helped himself to some edibles and decamped, fully resolved never to return home.

About the meeting of Joe and Retta, and their subsequent shipping on board the *Stanwix*, the reader already knows.

Jim Devon, than whom no smarter or more acute detective could be found, for various reasons had made up his mind that Pat Harris was in some way connected with the abduction of the banker's children, and when that individual had fled, and the chief of the detectives had detailed him to hunt up the murderer, he entered into the work with all his heart.

A few shrewd inquiries, a coupling together of some, what, to outsiders, would have seemed unimportant facts, and he reached the conclusion that Pat had been smuggled away on some outward-bound vessel, since he had searched the city thoroughly and knew that he was not in it.

Following up this theory, he stumbled upon the truth from a few words let drop by the pal who had helped Pat escape, and who incautiously said so to Jim Black, in the disguised detective's presence.

He found that Pat was on board the ship *Bramhall*, bound for an European port of some note.

There was his cue.

He would follow him; and learning that the *Stanwix* would sail the next day, and ascertaining that she was a fast sailer, he engaged passage on her, calculating to reach port two or three days at least, before the *Bramhall* did.

They had been out at sea but a few days, and had so far had an exceedingly good run of it, when one of those ever-to-be regretted affairs—the insubordination and punishment of one of the sailors—occurred.

The man, Billy Backus, had growled about the smallness of the quantity of grog served out, and when the server remonstrated with him for his discontented expressions, he had replied:

"That he'd growl just when he ——— pleased, and he might go to the warm place for all of him."

The server of the grog threatened to report the affair, which so incensed the sailor, that he set upon the other and pommelled him severely.

Ship discipline was strict—Billy had struck a superior and must be punished.

This was the captain's fiat, and so Billy was bound and on his bare back he received the twenty-five lashes of the 'cat' ordered by the captain.

Backus swore vengeance on both the captain and the man who had served the grog, and one morning the latter was found missing.

When questioned, one of the larboard watch said that near morning he had heard a splash in the water, and what might have been a cry for help, but which at the time he had attributed to his fancy.

All eyes were directed toward Backus, who had sworn vengeance on the man, but he stood stolidly listening to the whole without a quiver or the movement of a muscle, and furthermore, no proof, however slight, could be found against him, for he was in the starboard watch, which was below at the time, and he, of course, had no business on deck during the time of duty of the larboard watch, and no one had seen him, and so it became the general opinion that the unfortunate man had fallen overboard.

Devon, who was a good reader of character, made up his mind that Backus knew more concerning the man's death than he would care to tell, and warned the captain of him; for, said he:

"That Backus is a vengeful, malevolent fellow, and I believe he would as lieve kill a man as eat his dinner if he thought he would not be detected."

A few days rolled by and still the good ship *Stanwix* ploughed old ocean toward the distant goal.

It is evening, or rather night, for the sun had gone to rest several hours before, and the captain stood leaning over the quarter rail, musing upon a difficult nautical problem, that for some days he had been puzzling over.

The starboard watch was on duty, and it was Backus' trick at the wheel.

Once the captain thought of the man at the wheel and turned his gaze on him, but could he have seen the lurid, vengeful glare in Backus' eyes as he pretended to scrutinize the compass, he would not have turned his back again and resumed his thoughts as calmly as he did.

Backus gave one sweeping, keen glance about him.

The quarter deck was deserted, and the rest of the watch were too far forward to be cognizant of his action.

Stooping he picked up the tiller ropes and guyed the wheel so that it would maintain the same position without his holding it.

Then he drew his long, keen knife from its sheath, and after another sweeping look about him, he stepped away from the wheel, and with a cat-like tread, so soft it was, he advanced toward the captain, who, deeply wrapt in thought, was unconscious to all that was passing about him.

Slowly and stealthily the vengeful sailor drew near.

An exultant, devilish look shone from his eyes, and in anticipation of the successful issue of his murderous attempt, a feeling of satisfaction, of gratified revenge swelled up within him, and accompanied by a silent laugh of demoniacal glee.

Nearer he drew.

Still nearer.

The murderous knife is raised.

One step more and he will be near enough to strike.

The step is taken, the knife is drawn still higher.

Nerving his arm for the blow, he strikes—just as a shrill cry of warning breaks upon the air.

The new-comer darts forward and seeks to avert the blow, but it is too late; the knife entered the captain's side as he partially turned about at the shrill cry; still the force of the blow had been broken, and the wound which otherwise would have been fatal, became one of a painful nature only.

With a shrill cry of rage and curses rushing in torrents from his mouth, the dastardly villain faced about, and made a rapid pass at the intruder, who, however, was too quick for Backus, and darting away, the force of the blow carried the would-be assassin to the deck on his face.

Before he could rise, he was seized by the other members of the watch, who had rushed aft to see what the matter was, and it did not take many minutes to put Backus in irons and convey him to the ship's prison, there to await the action of a proper tribunal for attempted murder.

The person who had so opportunely appeared, and thus saved the captain's life, was Ben, the cabin boy, otherwise Retta Banks, who immediately became quite a hero.

Ben, for so we shall call Retta while in the character she now occupies, had seized this opportunity of going forward to see Joe, who, being in the larboard watch, was of course "off duty."

Ben had stepped on deck just as Backus drew up the knife for the final blow.

To utter the cry of warning, and rush forward to avert the stroke, was but an instant's work, and Ben had saved a life.

CHAPTER X.

THE "DEMON" PURSUED.

Bob and Yawpey lay perfectly still on deck for over half an hour, drawing in new life from the new, fresh atmosphere.

Meanwhile the fetid air of the *Demon* had given place to fresh, and it seemed like another place when Bob rushed down to change her course a little, as a little island jutted up from the sea a short distance ahead, they having deserted the pilot-house without even waiting to stop her engine.

Now that the danger was passed both of the boys felt jolly, and indeed began to think that in their wonderful vessel they could do anything or go anywhere.

It was in the morning that the *Demon* had come to the surface, and during the afternoon as they were skimming along, a queer-looking sea animal glided past them, going in the same direction.

Struck by its oddity Bob gave chase, and when it went below the surface, he did the same.

He followed it down to the very bottom, which in itself was the cause of quite an amusing incident in this way.

The larder was low and needed replenishing, and as

they were at their hunting-ground, Bob suggested that they should go out on a hunt.

Yawpey assented, and out they went.

They met with first-rate success, capturing two large fish, a turtle, and stumbling across a vegetable greatly resembling plantain leaves, which Bob surmised would make good food, and which, indeed, when boiled, tasted delicious.

As they were entering through the side door Yawpey saw an odd-looking fish which he wished to possess himself of.

To be brief it was a shell-fish, a mollusca, generally known as a cuttle-fish, and was attached to a small, flat stone.

Yawpey picked up the stone and carried both it and the cuttle-fish inside.

After they had taken their suits off, which was the work of a few seconds only, Yawpey approached his prize, and bending over it commenced curiously inspecting it.

The next moment a yell informed Bob that something had happened, and hurrying back to the room he had just left, he beheld Yawpey standing in the center of it, with hands hanging akimbo, mouth wide open, and he gasping for breath, eyes tightly shut, while from the end of his nose and prominent chin a black liquid was trickling, and Yawpey was as sable in hue as the most tropical negro.

To save himself Bob could not refrain from laughing at the comical sight.

"Yah!" snarled Yawpey, irately, "stand there and laugh. Yah! yah! of course—stand right still don't help a feller."

With his handkerchief Bob wiped the stuff from Yawpey's eyes so that he could see, which was no sooner done than Yawpey bounced over to the cuttle-fish, yelling:

"Dang you, I'll fix you," he raised it up rock and all and smashed it on the floor.

"Go and look in the glass," suggested Bob.

A little mirror hung in the parlor, and Bob, who remained where he was, presently heard a smothered cursing, and then Yawpey strode into the room and in a voice between a groan and a savage yell, lamented his fate in the following strain, while he perambulated the room back and forth:

"Dang the thing," here he paused, and mauled further the already mutilated body of his enemy. "Dang this craft, the man that built it, and anyone that has anything to do wi' it. I'm a nigger—a dirty black nigger—a nigger—just think of it," turning to Bob, "Yawpey Dick turned into a nigger."

The scene was too much for Bob's risibilities, and he burst out laughing.

This incensed Yawpey still further, and he stamped about, frowned and fretted, and the burden of his cry was:

"I'm a nigger—Yawpey Dick's a nigger."

At length Bob suggested that he should wash himself and try to remove the stain.

Yawpey stopped as if thunderstruck. Why had not he thought of it before?

He darted away to the kitchen in which the boys always performed their ablutions, and perhaps gave himself the most thorough washing he had ever received.

Meanwhile Bob had been examining the cuttle-fish, and presently discovered a pouch or satchet which had contained the liquid.

Those of my readers who have studied natural history are aware of the fact that the cuttle-fish possesses such a pouch, filled with a substance resembling ink, which, when enemies attack it, it ejects into the water, dyeing it so that his enemy is at a loss to find him, this being the only means of defense which the cuttle-fish has.

Yawpey had been bending over the fish and had placed a finger on one of its prominent eyes, when he received the full discharge in his face.

Presently Yawpey returned, much lighter in complexion but yet not in his normal color.

For a time he was almost inconsolable.

"It'll never come out, and I'm a nigger yet. What'll all the folks at Ball's Pond say when Yawpey goes home—a nigger?"

Bob cheered him up by telling that by repeated washings the stuff would all come off; and for some days afterwards Yawpey washed at least every half hour, until Bob put a veto on his using so much fresh water.

Their larder supplied, they returned to the surface, where they remained all night.

When morning broke, Bob discovered, to the leeward, a few miles astern, a steamer, whose course lay in the same direction as that which he was pursuing.

He kept to his course, and the steamer did also, and being a fast sailer, began to pick up a little on the *Demon*.

Bob did not wish to come into contact with the stranger, still he determined to remain on the surface until she came close, and then mystify her commander by suddenly sinking out of sight.

On came the steamer—closer and closer—each moment narrowing the gap between them, and Bob knew that the *Demon* had been seen, and saw that from the quarter-deck they were undergoing scrutiny through a marine glass.

At length the steamer ran up the English colors.

"She's an Englisher, Yawpey."

"Yah!"

"I'm sorry that we haven't got an American flag."

"Yah; so'm I."

The steamer kept gaining, and at last finding that the strange-looking craft, whose appearance greatly puzzled him, did not respond by showing her colors, the captain of the steamer gave a few directions.

A moment later a porthole was opened in her side.

A puff of white smoke, followed by a booming, told

Bob that he was dealing with an English man-of-war, and that he had been commanded to "lay to."

He kept serenely on notwithstanding.

The English captain, angered by this apparent contempt, issued further orders, which were followed by another puff of smoke, a booming noise, and the ricocheting of a ball across the water, which finally sank but a few feet from the *Demon*.

"This is getting dangerously interesting," thought Bob. "And now it's my turn to surprise old 'Alf-and-alf.'"

He drew out No. 4.

The *Demon* did not sink, but glided smoothly on.

"Hang it!" growled Bob. "What's the matter?"

He pushed it in and drew it out again, but the *Demon* failed to obey.

"Here's a pretty pickle. Crowd on all power, Yawpey, and let's try and drop the old cuss behind."

"Yah!" replied Yawpey, and under the fresh impetus the *Demon* went considerably faster; still not fast enough to get out of range of the long gun of the Englishman.

If they had run previously as fast as they were going now, they would have easily dropped the steamer; but they were now too near the lion's jaws for safety, which was evinced when a ball struck the deck a moment later, only to glide off the rounded deck into the sea, however.

"Lay to," cried Bob, "it's getting dangerous. I'll go and see what the matter is with the door."

About fifteen minutes' search disclosed the fact that some wire had been carelessly dropped so that it came into contact with the connection of the air-pump, which drew off the electric current and thus defeated its purpose.

He threw the wire into the far corner of the room, away from all connections, just as he heard Yawpey call him.

He bounded up the stairs and into the pilot-house.

The man-of-war, during his absence had come within five hundred feet of the *Demon*, her boat had been lowered, and was now being pulled in their direction, over half the distance having been accomplished.

The captain piqued at their previous apparent contempt for his authority and a little curiosity combined, instead of sending an officer to interview the strange craft which he had overhauled, took his place in the stern of the long boat.

He was a fat, pompous individual, with fierce mustachios, and a coat that was almost covered with lace and gold epaulettes and insignia of his rank.

The long boat was laid alongside the *Demon*, the captain arose to his feet, stepped authoritatively on board, and with a grandiloquent wave of his hand toward the two boys in the pilot-house, pompously said:

"This 'ere vessel must show 'er papers himmedately. Hi demand hit hin the name of 'er British Majesty."

"Let's souse the old duffer," suggested Bob.

"Yah! Bully!" chimed in Yawpey.

Bob drew No. 4.

The captain felt the *Demon* sinking beneath him, and glanced wildly toward the pilot-house and saw the two boys, Bob laughing contemptuously, while Yawpey had his fingers placed in juxtaposition with a certain portion of his physiognomy in a manner more expressive than polite.

The captain was fished out of the water, and returned to his vessel a sadder and wiser man, while our two friends beneath the surface enjoyed a hearty laugh, which, however was changed when two or three hours later they found themselves again placed in deadly peril.

CHAPTER XI.

IN DANGER AGAIN.

AFTER leaving the English captain floundering in the water, Bob kept the *Demon* on the course she had been previously pursuing, he having descended, as the reader will remember, beneath the surface.

A few minutes after their descent, Yawpey left the pilot-house, descended the stairs, walked back and down to the kitchen.

The color which the captured cuttle-fish had put in his face had not all come out yet, and drawing some water from the fresh-water tank, which by this time was getting pretty low, he gave it a thorough washing.

"It'll wash it, I guess," muttered Yawpey, as he surveyed in the glass the reflection it gave back.

Back to the pilot-house he went, and there he remained for about an hour, at the end of which Bob remarked that he was hungry, and bade Yawpey prepare something as good as his stock of provisions and ingenuity could supply.

"I say, Bob," said Yawpey, as he arose to do his bidding, "the fresh water is nearly gone."

"Yes, I know," replied Bob. "There's enough for a couple or three days though, isn't there?"

"Yah; I guess so."

"Well, we'll start back to Hermit Island (so Bob had named the island) to-morrow for a fresh supply. Now go and get dinner, Yawpey, for I'm fearfully hungry."

"Yah," and Yawpey started back to the kitchen.

A few minutes later he reappeared, his face pale, and an anxious look in his eyes.

"What's the matter?" asked Bob, surprised at Yawpey's quick return.

Yawpey attempted to reply, but his lower jaw dropped, displaying a cavernous gap from which no articulate sound proceeded.

Bob speedily made up his mind that something serious had happened, and vexed by the silence that Yawpey preserved, he angrily repeated his question, adding:

"Don't stand there grinning like an idiot. What's the matter?"

"The water is"—

"Is what?" demanded Bob.

"Guv out."

"How's that? Didn't you say there was water enough for several days?"

Silence.

"Are you an idiot?"

Bob had lost all patience with Yawpey.

"Yah, I 'spect so, cos I—I"—

"What? Come now, what did you do?"

"I—I—let it run away."

"Run away! How?"

"I washed—drew water you know, and left the spiggot turned on," replied crestfallen Yawpey, with hanging head and averted eyes.

"Fool! idiot!" said Bob, angrily, still somewhat relieved at knowing it was no worse, for from a study of the chart the day before he knew he could reach land in one day's sail. "Well," he added, a minute or two later, "go down and get me something to eat anyhow."

Yawpey departed and brought back some sea-biscuit, of which they still had a good store and some raw turtle's eggs, which, although not very palatable in this state, Bob was hungry enough to eat with some gusto, the albumen relieving his thirst to a great extent.

"We must go to the surface," said Bob, when he had finished, "and I'll take bearings, and then we'll away to the island."

Even as he turned to draw No. 5, he became aware of a rushing of some living mass behind them.

As he looked, with lightning-like speed the mass drew near.

It was a school of whales.

There came a heavy shock an instant after, and a careening as one of them struck the *Demon*.

Quick as thought Bob dropped the iron shutter which protected the glass of the pilot-house, and well it was that he did so, for the shock with which one of the school came against the iron would surely have broken the glass, and that broken meant death.

For over five minutes the water was fairly alive with these leviathans, and then through the hole in the shutter Bob saw the last straggler in the school sweep on ahead.

"Thank God, they've passed and we are all right," said Bob.

All right

Scarce had the words escaped his lips, when the *Demon's* engine began making a terrific number of revolutions to the minute, while at the same time she began slowing down.

Bob's quick eye saw the engine's quickened movement the moment it began, and realized that at the same time she began slowing down.

"What can be the matter now?" Bob questioned himself in some alarm. "God grant it may be nothing with the engine."

His hand leaped quickly to No. 2, and the engine was stopped.

"Can it be," thought Bob, "can it be that something has happened to the screw? Have the whales struck it and done it any injury, I wonder?"

The *Demon* by this time had lost most of her headway, and Bob drew No. 4 and held it until she rested on the bottom, which at this point was sandy and smooth as a kitchen floor.

Without a moment's hesitation the boys assumed their diving suits, and going outside, Bob led the way to the *Demon's* stern.

An examination of a moment and Bob pointed at the bare end of the shaft which protruded—the screw was gone.

In a moment Bob's mind had canvassed the situation; they could return to the surface and helplessly lie and await the chance passing of some vessel, which, however, could hardly be expected, since they were far away from any regular route, or, they could institute a search for the missing wheel and endeavor to repair the damages.

Meanwhile their water was exhausted, and every hour spent in either way could but bring on the pangs of thirst which Bob knew would begin ere long to assail them.

Sick at heart and depressed by their continually recurring perils, Bob sank down on the sand and dropped his helmeted head into his gloved hands.

He was thoroughly disheartened.

For perhaps half an hour he remained thus, then arising he beckoned Yawpey to follow, and they returned inside the *Demon*.

When he took his helmet off it revealed a face haggard with anxiety.

An apathy to his fate seemed to settle over this previously seeming invincible lad, and once or twice a groan escaped his lips.

For some hours he paced to and fro, thirst the while growing upon him to some degree.

He had recourse to the one single remaining bottle of brandy, which seemed, if anything, to increase his thirst.

"Yawpey," said Bob at last, breaking the silence, his voice husky and broken, "we must not perish thus. We must endeavor to find the lost wheel. If we find it we must bring it here. We can't take the *Demon* to it. Whether it will be too heavy to handle or not remains to be seen. It appears to be our only hope of salvation."

"Yah!" replied Yawpey. "I was thinking of that myself. Let's go now."

"Yes, we'll start immediately, or rather, just as soon as I fix the lamp on the pilot-house; it must be burning low by this time."

An electric light, as most of my readers no doubt know, is made by bringing the points of two pieces of charcoal in juxtaposition, attaching the negative pole of the battery to one piece, and the positive to the other.

The electricity plays between these points and this produces the light, at the same time slowly consuming the charcoal.

To keep these pieces of charcoal at the proper distance at all times, the old hermit, fully understanding the principle, had constructed an ingenious piece of mechanism somewhat resembling clockwork in appearance, which accomplished this result.

As Bob had anticipated, the light had begun burning low from the fact that of one of the pieces there scarcely remained half an inch, and this was too far sundered from the other.

Glancing into a wooden box which had been full when they started out, Bob found but two pieces remaining.

These he placed in the large lamp, while he, to save what remained in the smaller lamps, disconnected the battery, and the two lights, as a consequence, expired.

They assumed their suits and started out, and separating some few feet, they followed back over the course the *Demon* had come but a few hours before.

For about three-quarters of an hour they hunted about, and then by the growing fetidity of the supply of air in their knapsacks, they were compelled to return with their tasks unaccomplished.

After a rest of half an hour or so they started out again, but not until Bob had ascended to the pilot-house and arranged the large concave reflector so as to send a broad stream back over the ground to be examined, something he had not thought of doing the first time.

They separated farther than they had before, but again were compelled to return for fresh air without having met with a single thing to give them encouragement.

Again they ventured out and again returned disappointed.

Not to have been disheartened would be more than human, and when Bob had removed his helmet he cried:

"Yawpey, it's no use; we may as well submit to the fate in store for us," and the tones expressed the hopelessness of the situation.

"Yah! I think so," said Yawpey, in sorrowful and lugubrious tones, which, as another thought crossed his brain (which seemed capable of containing but one at a time) brightened, and with a broad smile and pointing with his index finger at his still dark face, he said: "Anyhow, the folks at Ball's Pond will never know I was a nigger."

It was Yawpey who said it, and even ludicrous and flighty this speech seemed more so; and despite the desperate appearance of the situation, the tone of relief with which he had said that "the folks at Ball's Pond will never know that I was a nigger," was more than Bob could stand, and he burst into a hearty laugh.

There is something cheering, enlivening in a hearty laugh, which lightens care and sorrow and reads the cobwebs of trouble which have been spun across the brain.

And thus it was with Bob.

He grew more hopeful again, and after they had rested and partaken of some turtle's eggs, they started out again, and this time they met with success, for having gone farther back than at any previous time Bob found the lost wheel.

"Thank God!" he fervently murmured, as he sank down on it.

Yawpey was some distance away, but presently he came near, and Bob beckoned him to come to him.

As he neared, Bob arose and pointed at the wheel, and an instant later their hands met in a cordial grasp of congratulation.

They found that they could lift it, but it was very awkward to handle, so at a motion from Bob, it was laid down again.

They could not communicate their thoughts then, so Bob led the way back to the *Demon*, carefully noting the precise direction in which it lay from her.

Here he procured about forty or fifty feet of wire, and then they returned to where the wheel lay.

Bob fastened one end around it, and then forming a large loop in the other, they both entered it, and bringing it against their breasts, they bent forward and began dragging it toward the *Demon*, over the sand.

The light on the pilot-house was their guiding star, and Bob had glanced up at it, when it struck him that it had dimmed somewhat, and but a few minutes later it expired.

Still they were headed in the proper direction, and Bob did not despair of finally reaching her, and it was not so dark but that objects of any size could be seen, although but indistinctly. This was due to the sandy nature of the bottom, which refracted light on the same principle that does snow, which makes moderately light what would otherwise be the darkest of nights.

Suddenly Yawpey halted and shrank back, grasping Bob's shoulder, and pointing with a finger of his disengaged hand at a dark streak that was rapidly gliding over the sand, crossing their pathway just ahead of them.

As Bob looked it swerved to the left, glided back, crossed behind them and came up on the other side. It had made a complete circle around them.

Both boys took their knives out, and then, with a terrible fascination, stood and watched this creature of the sea, as it hesitated a moment and then completed another circle about them.

Around them again and again it went, at each complete circle drawing nearer and nearer.

It turned its head, a huge mouth opened, and from it was darted back and forth with inconceivable rapidity, a frightful forked tongue.

The visitor was a tremendous sea serpent.

Around them once more it went, and then a momentary halt, a swift flash, and it clove the water and came

flying towards the two boys, who, however, stood ready to receive him.

The serpent had miscalculated the distance, and passed above their heads, and as he was going Bob gave a dig at him, and the sharp blade springing from the handle, inflicted a great long gash in his side.

Enraged, it quickly turned, and with its horrid fiendish jaws stretched wide, it sprang again.

It struck between the boys, but partially turned and with lightning-like rapidity wound a number of folds around Bob, while Yawpey, terror-stricken, sank prone upon the sand.

With the blade of his knife in position, Bob, summoning all his self-control to his aid, placed the hilt against the devilish creature's body and touched the spring. The blade sank deep in the monster's body, and raging with pain and anger, it suddenly unwound itself and darted away, only to turn a moment after, quick as a flash, and with eyes that emitted a lurid, hellish glare, it darted forward.

The serpent struck Bob—he tried to preserve his balance, but could not, and measured his length on the sandy bottom, the wire loop inside of which he had been standing and holding on to, to steady himself, being jerked from his grasp.

He lay flat on his back, the body of the large serpent laying across his breast. His knife-blade was quickly readjusted, and again he sank the blade into the monster's body.

With a wild lashing, and a writhing that stirred up the sand until it was as dark as midnight, the serpent, evidently aware that he was getting the worst of the battle, and in agony from pain, darted away and did not return to renew the conflict.

Bob arose to his feet, and then assisted Yawpey up.

Then he turned to look for the wheel. It was gone!

For a moment it seemed inexplicable, and then Bob remembered how the wire had been jerked from his hand as the serpent struck him. It was plain then; the monster had become entangled in the wire and had dragged the wheel away with him.

And Bob again was in utter despair.

CHAPTER XII.

PAT HARRIS—BEN BOLT.

THE *Sea Gull*, the vessel on which Pat Harris had shipped, once outside the Hook, bowled merrily onward, dashing the water in silvery spray before her bows, and each moment lessening the chance of her being apprehended.

But it was not until they were fairly out of sight of land that Pat would venture on deck.

His "pal" had shipped him as an able-bodied seaman, which Pat was not, never having been at sea in his life, and at the first order he received he stood and questioningly surveyed the orderer.

"Darn it, why don't you obey?" impatiently asked the officer.

"What do you want me to do?" asked Pat.

"I want you to clear away the maintopsail hal-yards," said the officer, in severe tones.

"What are they? Where are they?" asked Pat, thus betraying his utter ignorance of seamanship.

"Are you an idiot? Weren't you shipped as a first-class seaman?" demanded the irate officer.

"I don't know what I was shipped for; I was blind drunk."

The officer, thinking Pat was fooling him, became so incensed at that individual that he called the boatswain and bade him give the supposed hypocrite a dozen lashes, and despite Pat's entreaties, they were given in good earnest.

When it afterward became apparent that Pat really knew nothing, the officer who had ordered the whipping merely remarked:

"I suppose he ought not to have been thrashed, still it's good discipline for a landlubber; it teaches them what to expect if they don't mind."

Days passed by, the wind continued fair and the *Sea Gull* sped onward toward the distant port for which she was bound.

But at length, as if to pay up for such a fine streak of weather, there came a succession of heavy squalls, which made the *Sea Gull* quiver in every timber.

She was not rated as an A 1 vessel; still, she had ever been considered seaworthy, and her owners had not hesitated to freight her very heavily.

The consequence was, that ere she had passed through these squalls, she had sprung a leak.

The pumps, however, kept her free of water during the four or five days of clear weather that intervened, before they found themselves again forced to face a very tempest. Then the leak already formed grew larger, and the pumps could not pump the water out as fast as it came in.

Momentarily it gained.

At first, when the boatswain sounded the vessel's well, he reported three feet of water.

An hour later it was five.

Another hour and it was eight.

All hands were at the pumps; but, despite their utmost efforts, the disheartening information that the water was still gaining greeted them every few minutes.

The gale had passed, the sea was subsiding, and the captain encouraged the men by telling them that if they could keep her afloat until the sea became smooth the leak could be stopped.

But in vain.

Ere the white caps had departed, fifteen feet of water was reported, and the men, convinced of the utter uselessness of working, left the pumps, and gathering in little groups about the deck, discussed the situation with grave faces and graver words.

Presently the captain appeared on the quarter-deck and signified that he wanted to speak.

The men all gathered near, and the captain said:

"I, too, am convinced that the vessel cannot be

saved, although it would have pleased me better had you remained at the pumps a while longer. The vessel will probably remain afloat yet some hours. I have studied the situation, and this is what I propose. The boats will contain all but four of us. That four must build a raft and trust themselves on it to the mercy of the waves. I have torn up a paper, and have placed as many pieces as there are men in my hat, numbered from one upwards. Let every man draw a piece, and I will accept the last one, whatever it may be, and those who draw the first four numbers must go on board the raft. Are you all agreed?"

Murmurs of "Yes, the captain is acting square," "he is putting himself on a level with us," "he takes his chance the same as any of us," and the like floated around from mouth to mouth, and when the captain repeated his question there was a unanimous cry of assent.

The numbers were drawn, and, as we only will follow the fate of the raft for the present, we will merely chronicle the fact that those who drew the first four numbers were: First, Pat Harris; Bob Gascone, a seaman; Harry Lucky, the first lieutenant; and a passenger who had sailed in the *Sea Gull*, a foreigner, who was returning home to enjoy the wealth he had gained in America, Taheto Zabuc by name.

Everything being satisfactorily settled, the captain informed them that the nearest land was due southwest, about two hundred and fifty miles distant.

All the sailors joined in and helped construct a raft, which, having time, was made quite complete in all its appointments, a small spar having been erected on it and one of the vessel's sails cut down in size so as to correspond.

When ready the raft was launched, the four men with a good supply of water and provisions being on board.

The rope that held her was cut loose, and the sail filling, she was soon some distance from the *Sea Gull*, which not long after their departure sank out of sight, the freightage of metals carrying her down sooner that she would have gone with a different class of merchandise.

As long as daylight lasted they kept together, but in the darkness, aided by the wind, which still blew in strong gusts at intervals, they separated, and when daylight again dawned, those on the raft saw none of their friends in sight, while the same light revealed the fact that during the latter part of the night the hastily secured cask of water had been washed from its moorings by the waves that occasionally broke over the raft, at times momentarily submerging her.

This was bitter news, and before nightfall they were all suffering severely from thirst.

At the best, providing the wind held out fair, they could not expect to reach land inside of three or four days, and this made the outlook anything but pleasant.

And fate seemed against them, too, for their food had become saturated by the salt water, and was unfit to be eaten.

Ere another night passed, Bob Gascone, a fellow equally as villainous as Pat Harris, suggested to the latter the propriety of "slitting the foreigner's wizen."

So great was Pat's thirst that he would have been only too glad to slake it at this human fountain; and when his greed, too, was excited by the prospect of handling Zabuc's money, he consented to join in.

Lots were drawn as to who should do the deed, and it fell on Gascone.

Drawing his knife, he crept stealthily to where the unconscious victim was lying, leaving Pat at the tiller, an oar placed across the stern in a slot made for the purpose.

Presently a deep groan announced the fact that the murderous knife had been driven home, and as Pat darted forward he saw his companion in crime eagerly lapping the gurgling red stream, and with but a moment's hesitation he too joined in the ghastly banquet.

The sudden yawing in the raft, as unguided she came up in the wind, aroused Lucky.

His eye roved around until it lighted on these two very bloodhounds.

With an oath expressing his horror, he bade them stop, threatening to shoot them if they did not.

Cowed by his tones, they slunk away; but when he bent over the dead body of Zabuc, Harris darted forward and gave him a violent push which sent him headlong into the sea, and despite his prayers for mercy, the devils that they were, sailed on, and left him to sink into a watery grave.

We spare the reader the relation of what further occurred for the next two days, at the expiration of which they were with in sight of land.

They reached the shores safely, all traces of their hideous crime fully removed, to find themselves surrounded by a group of savages, who minutely examined the raft and its sail, and felt of the faces of the men to satisfy themselves that they were actually white.

Never before had they gazed upon a white man, and they were puzzled at seeing a complexion so much lighter than their own.

Of one thing, however, these two fiends in human shape remained not long in ignorance.

They had fallen into the hands of cannibals, and even the most dull could have not misunderstood their significant pantomimic motions as to the final disposition of the two captives thus thrown into their hands.

A singular accident, however, saved their lives.

They were separated, and not allowed to see or speak to each other, otherwise they were treated kindly, and fed plentifully, on the not unpalatably prepared food of the islands.

Pat had run short of tobacco, and wrote a request on a chip he found, to Gascone for some of the weed.

By making motions, he finally made his guard understand that he wanted the chip given to his companion.

It was delivered and Gascone returned some tobacco by the bearer; who meanwhile had scanned the chip, turning it in every conceivable position, very closely.

He, however, could see no connection between the article given him and the hieroglyphics on the chip, and reported the, to him, inexplicable circumstance to the king, who being gifted with a great amount of curiosity, desired to see further specimens of this wonderful talking-chip.

Two or three evidences that each understood what the other wrote only mystified him the more, and having drawn the whole tribe together, with Pat and Gascone in the center, he harangued them a few moments, then gave some directions and Pat was led away.

The king took one of a number of prettily-colored shells from a string about his waist and placed it beneath the foot of a blear-eyed individual near him, and then gave Gascone to understand that by the aid of a chip he must inform his friend where the shell lay.

Gascone wrote a few words; Pat was led back, looked at the chip, and then walking up, raised the foot of the man under which it was.

This convinced the king that they were of more than earthly origin; they were set free and given to understand that they were persons of great importance, and by signs they were informed that they would be expected to teach the king the mysterious art of talking by chips.

And so, by this simple circumstance, were the two villains made prime ministers to a man-eating king.

* * * * *

Meanwhile the *Stanwix* was gliding rapidly along toward her destination, everything, from the time of the attempt on the captain's life, running without a jar.

Jim Devon, the detective, felt happy at the progress they were making, and calculated on being able, when the *Sea Gull* came into port, to board her and place his hand on the shoulder of Pat Harris and take him into custody.

The same squall that proved the destruction of the *Sea Gull* struck them, but the *Stanwix* passed serenely through it, and when it had passed, uninterruptedly pursued her course.

We will pass over the little details of the passage from this out, merely stating that when Jim Devon went ashore, after they entered port, he found that the *Sea Gull* had not yet arrived.

The *Stanwix* remained in port several days, during which, the rascal who had attempted the captain's life was tried upon the charge, convicted and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

His hatred of Ben Bolt was of the most intense character, and he would do or give anything to accomplish the lad's destruction.

He had a fitting companion on board the *Stanwix*, a sandy-haired, low-browed, repulsive Portuguese; and on the day of their arrival, through the grated door of the ship's prison, the following conversation ensued:

"I say, Porchy, (a slang term for Portuguese) want to make a hundred dollars?"

"Ya, I think I do; but how?"

"You know young Ben Bolt?"

"Guess I do," snarled the Portuguese, whom Ben had once detected in stealing, and for which the pilferer received a dozen or more strokes of the cat.

"Well, tumble him overboard some night, and I'll give you a hundred dollars. It's all the money I've got in the world, but by—I'd sell my soul to the devil for more, but what I'd have my revenge."

"Where's the money?" asked the Portuguese.

"Here it is," said the other, handing a roll of bills through the grating. "I'm jugged safe enough, and they'd take it away from me anyhow, so you might as well have it. The *Stanwix*, you know, is coming back in two months, and I want you to hunt me up and let me know whether you keel him over or not."

"All right, I'll do it," and gritting his teeth in a vindictive way that boded young Ben Bolt no good, the Portuguese moved away.

Before the *Stanwix* left port, one of the boats of the *Sea Gull* arrived, and from a series of questions put to them, Devon made up his mind that Pat Harris was one of those who had taken to the raft.

What next should he do?

A strong, undefinable impulse to continue on board the *Stanwix* seized him.

In vain he endeavored to shake it off, but like the ghost in Shakespeare—"it would not down," and the result was that he accompanied her when she left, bound for the sunken treasure ship *Esmerelda*.

Ben Bolt meanwhile, by his attention to the duties imposed on him, rapidly advanced in the captain's regard, and by others on board was regarded as a young hero.

They were well advanced on their way to the sunken ship, when Ben one evening, during Grumbling Joe's "off duty" spell, visited him in the fore-castle; leaving which sometime later he stopped, and leaning across the bows near the cathead was drinking in the scene presented by the waves which lightly rose and fell with phosphorescent flashes.

Suddenly, two hands were placed on his shoulders, and a violent push was given.

He strove to retain his balance but could not and over he went.

Fortunately he caught the cathead chain as he went, but his assailant, seeing this, tore loose his hold, and with a call for help which was partially smothered by the water as he struck it, he disappeared beneath the surface.

His cry had been heard, and a cask thrown over by

kinder hands, he gained by battling with the waves until it came near enough to lay hold of.

He could see that the ship had been laid to, but she had been crossing one of those currents that sweep through the ocean for thousands of miles, and the result was that he was carried off by it at right angles with the course they had been pursuing, and so the boat which was immediately lowered failed to find the lad.

The *Starwix* beat around until daylight, but nought could be seen of the lad, and with a heavy heart the captain ordered the sailing master to lay the vessel once more on her course.

And Ben?

With a sinking heart he saw the vessel lost in the distance as he drifted helplessly away.

The morning dawned at last after a miserable night, and by its light he realized that he had naught but death to hope for.

The sun rose fervid and red, and by the time it had sunk to rest in the western sky Ben was almost dead with the fatigue and exposure to its pitiless rays, which had been pouring down upon his unprotected head all day long.

The night advanced and Ben felt his strength waning, and his arms were numb and rigid from clinging to the cask.

He felt his fingers slipping away from their hold—he sought to renew it, but they refused to be governed by him.

A murmured prayer for mercy dropped from his lips, and he gradually slipped away from the cask and was slowly sinking deeper into the sea.

But—is it a nightmare?

A hallucination?

Scarce five hundred feet distant there suddenly arose a light, then two more, and they were upon, to Ben, a strange-looking vessel.

With new vigor he clung to the cask and raised a cry for help.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WHEEL FOUND.

Bob was completely unnerved by the loss of the propelling wheel, and inwardly cursed the man who put it on in so careless a manner.

The key that held it to the shaft had not been inserted properly, had worked loose, and as Bob surmised, one of the whales had struck it, wrenching it violently enough to cause the key to drop out altogether, after which it was a matter of but time for the wheel to drop off.

Where the wheel had been drawn across the sand, it left a track, and this they followed for over a half mile at right angles from the direction of the *Demon*, and then they gave it up.

Thinking to save time, and persuaded that he knew precisely the direction to take, Bob left the trail and started off without any guides.

It nearly cost him his life; for it was not until they were almost dead from asphyxia that they saw the dim outlines of the *Demon* before them.

They reached the inside, and as the helmets were removed, both boys sank exhausted and faint to the floor.

They revived in a short time in the purer air, and Yawpey, bringing the last of the turtles' eggs, they ate them.

They had been some hours without water, and their throats were dry and parched, but the raw eggs in a measure relieved their thirst.

Bob ascended to the pilot-house, and seating himself by the steering-wheel he leaned his head on it, and bent his mind to the task of finding some loophole through which to escape.

But none could he see.

"I'm going to have some light on the situation, at all events," muttered Bob, at length rising, and shortly after he sent the electric spark to the lamp on the fore deck, and the darkness was dispelled.

As he gloomily resumed his seat he happened to glance ahead of the vessel—started violently—and then, in accents agitated but hopeful, murmured:

"Surely, God is good after all. We may escape with life yet."

What had he seen? Simply the body of the serpent stretched out in death a short distance from the bows, the wire stretching out behind. The wheel he could not see, but knew that it was at the other end of the wire.

Calling Yawpey he imparted the good news, and that individual fairly went crazy with delight, and gave vent to various phrases such as only a Yawpey could utter, and pranced around and flung his legs high enough to have caused the most accomplished can-can dancer to die of envy.

They went outside and found the wheel lying by the side of the *Demon*.

The serpent after getting the wire in his mouth and being wounded, had, as the reader knows, started away at right angles with the vessel, but, crazy with pain, he finally turned two or three times and then approached the *Demon*. He had darted up on one side and made a short turn around the bow. The wire slipped under her bottom, and the wheel came up against the *Demon's* side.

The shock with which the wheel struck, so fast was the serpent going, was sufficient to cause the wire to break the jaws of the monster, and he expired at almost the same moment.

To describe the feelings of thankfulness that filled the hearts of the two boys would be impossible.

They set to work immediately, removed the wire from the propeller, and lugged it to the stern, and placed it on the shaft.

Then they went inside. Bob secured a piece of wood, made a pattern key of it, and then selecting a nearly

worn-out chisel, he commenced filing it down to the proper size.

The chisel being very hard the progress was slow.

But at last a happy thought struck Bob, he would forge it.

Using a heavy sledge for an anvil, he carried it into the battery-room.

Then he laid the chisel against one of the copper conducting-rods, and sent a current through it.

In less than a minute the chisel was at forging heat, and then with bright hopes of ultimate success, he merrily plied his hammer.

Slowly but surely the chisel was drawn out and hammered to the proper shape.

Several hours' work, and the task was accomplished.

With a joyful heart, Bob went to the *Demon's* stern, carrying a hammer and the key.

It fitted to perfection, and with an exultant cry, Bob drove it home.

He meant to have secured the skin of the huge serpent, over thirty feet long, but time was precious and he dared not delay.

With a heart joyous and light, he ascended to the pilot-house and drew out No. 5.

She raised from the bottom.

Then with trembling fingers he drew No. 4.

The engine started, the shaft turned, and the propelling wheel revolved.

Once more they were under way, and masters of the situation.

"Hurroo!" replied Yawpey. "Hurroo! hurroo!"

"The day is gained, the victory's ours," was Bob's more quiet expression of his feelings.

"Yah! yah! that am so. Hurroo!" delightedly said Yawpey.

They reached the surface and found it to be mid-day. Bob sought his chart, took an observation, and learning where the *Demon* was, found the nearest land to be over a hundred miles southwest of him, an island which was described, in these words:

"Never has been visited—was discovered by Captain Cook in—, and is supposed to be inhabited by savages—presumably cannibals."

Cannibals or not, water must be had, and Bob pointed the *Demon's* prow in that direction, and when the sun was sinking they were but a few miles from the shore.

As they approached nearer, Bob saw that they had been observed, for several large canoes, filled with savages put off from the island. Gradually the boats came together, exactly in the *Demon's* path, and Bob saw that the occupants were all armed with long spears, which they seemed to be holding ready for use.

When the *Demon* came close enough a flight of them were directed at the glass sides of the pilot-house.

A little contemptuous laugh rolled from Bob's lips, and he formed the resolve to run the inhospitable savages down. Heading the *Demon* at the largest of the canoes, he sent her flying toward it. An instant later came a crash, and the canoe was smashed, several of the savages being killed by the striking of the *Demon's* iron prow, and the rest were struggling in the water. As the canoe was struck, there arose from the stern a white man.

Bob saw and recognized—Pat Harris.

He could scarce believe his eyes, and yet he had suffered too much at Pat Harris' hands not to be sure that the burly figure and lowering, sinister face belonged to that individual.

But he could lose no time in moralizing, and turning the *Demon* partially about, he speedily demolished the other canoe.

Glancing at the shore, and scanning it closely, Bob saw, not over half a mile distant, the shimmer of a brooklet, which, running down the hill that ended at the shore, here emptied itself into the ocean.

Toward that he directed the *Demon's* course, and a few minutes later, as the vessel grounded softly, they jumped into the sea and waded ashore, Yawpey carrying several buckets.

They slaked their thirst, filled their buckets, and were safely ensconced inside the vessel again, ere the yelling savages reached the spot.

Bob backed her. At first she would not budge; but her enemies, rushing into the water, sought to detain her by clambering on the stern and pushing against it.

This just suited Bob, for it elevated her bow, and the *Demon* glided back in fine style.

Bob turned her about, and when they had reached water deep enough, he sank her, and left the savages to swim ashore.

He headed her for Hermit Island, where they remained long enough to fill up with fresh water, and to burn charcoal for their electric lights.

These things provided for, Bob determined to now go direct to the *Esmerelda*, and endeavor to recover some of the wealth which she had taken with her into her ocean grave.

Bob, for the sake of the strange sights which the powerful electric lights revealed, liked sailing beneath the surface best; so, after leaving Hermit Island, he ran for a long distance under water.

At length, however, thinking that fresher air would be beneficial, he drew No. 5, and up they went to the surface.

Bob ascended the stairs, threw open the door in the deck and stepped out, his ears being assailed at the same moment by a shrill cry for help.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ESMERELDA FOUND.

"HELP!"

So suddenly the cry rang out that Bob was startled; but remembering himself, he shaded his eyes with his hand and endeavored to locate the spot that it came from.

"Help! Help! Quick—or I perish."

He had mistaken the direction of the first cry, and now turning whence the last came he saw within the radius of the electric light a floating cask, and clasping it a boy, whose face, as a wave brought it into view, was unearthly pale.

"Courage," cried Bob. "Just a moment more and I'll be with you."

It took but a few seconds for him to place himself in the pilot-house, to grasp the steering-wheel and bring the *Demon* sharply around, as well as to send Yawpey on deck to help the castaway on board.

Poor Ben Bolt!

Rescue was close at hand; but a few minutes more and he would be in safety.

But weak and exhausted, he could hold fast to his float only by the greatest exertion.

He saw the figure disappear from the deck, saw the boat turn about a moment later, then saw another figure appear outside.

"Thank God!" murmured Ben. "I shall yet be saved."

The *Demon* was not over five hundred feet from him when a hoarse cry of alarm burst from Yawpey's lips, and penetrating to the pilot-house, Bob looked around.

Yawpey stood so that the glare of the light shone full upon him, and Bob saw his face pale as he looked; he was trembling and shaking, and as his eyes turned towards the pilot-house there was pictured again in them the terrible scene which would never be obliterated from his memory.

He raised one agitated, waving arm and pointed beyond the castaway.

Bob looked, and just within the circle of light he saw the dorsal fins of a number of those devils—man-eaters—sharks.

He knew to what these fins belonged, knew the reputation of the shark, and possessed a dread of ever coming into contact with one.

He sent the *Demon* flying toward the castaway.

Would he reach him in time?

The sharks, who first had been attracted by the light, had now arrived so close that they saw the lad hanging to the cask, and towards him they rushed, each seeming to vie with the other in point of speed.

It was a race between the *Demon* and the sharks, a priority of arrival meaning life or death to young Ben Bolt, who, realizing from Yawpey's cry that some new danger menaced, had turned himself around far enough to see these voracious, blood thirsty sea-tigers, for so the sailors appropriately call them.

"Swim toward us," yelled Yawpey.

"I can't," groaned Ben.

On the *Demon* dashed, and on with frightful rapidity came the sharks.

Yawpey hallooed, yelled and danced around in hopes of frightening them, but to no purpose, they pursued their course.

Which would reach the lad first?

The sharks gain by a second of time.

A shrill cry from Ben—despair the key-note.

The *Demon's* prow was beside him, her swelling middle was within a few inches of his hand.

He sought to grasp it, but his unnerved fingers refused to close at his bidding.

Yawpey leaned down, shuddered as he saw the white, upturned stomach of the largest and most ferocious shark of the lot, open mouth, in which glistened those banks of white, cruel teeth.

He nerved himself for the snatch, for the only thing that could save the boy was a seizing hold of him and drawing him suddenly away.

Ben, as we stated, sought to seize hold of the *Demon*, but failed. Ere the unnerved arm dropped to his side, Yawpey caught it, Ben was jerked away from the cask, there came a snapping sound, caused by the shark's teeth coming together.

His prey had been snatched from his mouth.

But all was not over yet.

At the rate at which the *Demon* was going—the resistance of the water was so great that Yawpey could not pull Ben up on deck and the result was that the boy was trailing along in the water, his rescuer having all he could do even to keep him thus.

The sharks, enraged at losing their prey, darted after the retreating boat and began to overhaul her.

Bob from the pilot-house saw it all—the rescue, Yawpey's inability to draw Ben on deck, and the shark's chase, so, fastening the wheel, he hurried on deck, seizing hold also of Ben's arm.

A simultaneous pull, the lad was lying on deck, and the defeated sharks were left like gaunt wolves cheated of their prey to hang upon their track.

It is a singular fact, but one well known, that sharks when once a vessel has given them a victim by any mishap, will hang upon her track and follow in her wake until they are compelled to drop her by her approaching a harbor; and, in several cases, notably one in which the crew had been attacked by a malignant fever—which necessitated throwing its victims overboard without the customary canvas-covering and weights, as soon as they were dead—these sea-wolves, cannibals, tigers, as they have variously been called, followed the vessel into a large harbor, nor did they leave her until one half their number had been killed by cannon trained to bear on them, from the deck of a war-vessel which chanced to be lying there.

Although their victim had escaped them in this instance, they did not quit the *Demon* until nearly daylight.

Meanwhile Bob had picked up the senseless body of Ben Bolt, and assisted by Yawpey, they carried him inside.

The first thing to be done was to restore the unfortunate lad to consciousness.

Bob had taught Yawpey how to handle the boat, and now sent him to the pilot-house, with instructions to slow her down a little and keep her to the course she had originally been pursuing.

Then he brought out the brandy bottle.

There was but a little left, and it was the last, they having opened and drank from it the day of losing their propelling wheel.

Still there was enough, and forcing open the mouth of the unconscious lad, Bob allowed perhaps as much as would fill a small wine glass to trickle down his throat.

A few minutes later he repeated the dose, meanwhile having taken off the lad's shoes, dried his feet and wrapped a blanket around them.

The liquor seemed now to take effect, and the lad opened his eyes, gazed for a moment at Bob, then wearily closed them again.

"So far, good," thought Bob, and then commenced unbuttoning the wet clothes that hung tightly to his patient, which seemed to rouse him immediately, for, springing quickly to a sitting position, he cried:

"No, no; leave me alone, I will undress myself."

"You are too weak," said Bob. "Lie still and let me do it."

"No; leave me to myself, please."

The voice was hoarse with cold, but there was a silvery thrill in it, nevertheless, and the last word betokened such an evident desire to be left alone that Bob, after giving him some more brandy, retired, saying as he went.

"I'll be back in a few minutes."

He went to the pilot-house, altered the *Demon's* course a few points, and after dallying around a short while, returned to the little *salon*, back of the parlor, whither they had carried the stranger, to find him snugly ensconced in bed with the covers held tightly about him.

Bob brought other covers and piled them on the bed, and ere long Ben commenced perspiring profusely, and then dropped into a heavy sleep from which he awoke some hours later much refreshed and with the chill driven from his system.

Meanwhile his clothing had been dried, and when Bob returned, after a moment's absence on one occasion, it was to find the rescued lad, his *protege*, up and dressed.

"Ah! ha! up I see," said Bob, cheerily. "You are exerting yourself too soon, I am afraid."

Ben started as the tones struck his ear; there seemed something familiar in them which he had not noticed before, and then he scrutinized the face of the speaker closely.

Bob bore it good naturedly, and jocularly said:

"I guess you must have seen me before?"

"Yes—no," said Ben in a dazed way. "You—you—are—not?"

"Not who?"

"Not Grumbling Joe?"

"I think not."

"Nor even his brother?"

"Nor even his brother," repeated Bob. "Do I resemble such a person?"

"Yes, very much indeed. And you were never on board the *Stanwix*?"

"No."

"You look like him, speak like him—and yet Joe must be younger. Your name is?"

"Bob."

"What else?" queried Ben.

"That's all," replied Bob. "I have no other—and now what is your name?"

"Ben Bolt. Your last name isn't Black, is it?" persisted Ben in asking questions.

"No."

"Sure?" asked Ben, in a puzzled manner.

"Yes, quite," returned Bob, with some asperity of manner, not much liking this quizzing. "But come outside and get something to eat; you must be hungry."

Without a word Ben followed his conductor to the parlor, which Bob had turned into a dining-room for the present.

On the table was the best their larder supplied, and after satisfying his hunger, Ben, who had meanwhile been furtively scanning Bob from head to foot, said:

"I suppose you would like to know something about me?"

"Just as you please," returned Bob.

And then Ben gave him an account of his adventures from the time of meeting Joe until his rescue from the perilous position he so lately had been in, during which he spoke of the *Stanwix* being on a mission to recover the lost wealth buried in the depths, in the *Esmerelda*.

"Did you say," asked Bob, when Ben had finished his story, "that the *Stanwix* was hunting for the lost treasure ship?"

"Yes."

"So am I."

"You?" queried Ben.

"Yes," was the reply. "We are now on our way to find her hulk. In fact, half a day's sail will take us to where she is, and even now the *Stanwix* must have arrived at the spot. But, nevertheless, I have the advantage of them, I think."

"How?"

"Because I can lay the *Demon* alongside of her and remain there while they will have to work from the surface."

"The *Demon*—what is it?"

"This vessel."

"But how can you lay alongside of the *Esmerelda*? She is at the bottom of the sea."

"Exactly," said Bob, enjoying Ben's surprise. "And that's just where the *Demon* can go."

"That explains my seeing your light all of a sudden; you must have just come up."

"We had, and if you feel strong enough and will go with me to the pilot-house, I'll show you how we sink her."

Going to the pilot-house together, after closing the deck-door, Bob drew No. 4, and the *Demon* sank beneath the surface.

Ben was a little afraid at first, but seeing that every-

thing went along all right, and noticing the confident demeanor with which Bob maneuvered the vessel, he was quite carried away with the strange sights revealed to his astonished eyes, and voted that Bob was the best of fellows, and the *Demon* a perfect miracle, and expressed his determination to stick by them through thick and thin.

It was getting near noon, and Bob took the vessel to the surface for the purpose of taking an observation, by means of which he ascertained that he was barely twenty miles from the *Esmerelda's* supposed position.

They glided along rapidly and presently the masts of the *Stanwix* could be seen from on board the *Demon*; then they went below the surface again and slowing down, so as to give them a better opportunity of examining the bottom of the sea, they all posted themselves on the lookout.

They uttered not a word during the next hour that passed, each being engaged in eagerly scanning the seabottom above which they were but a few feet.

Ben's post was to keep an eye to leeward, and as it only required his eyes, his brain was busy.

And this was his train of thought:

"He must be some relation to Joe, or else it is a very strange coincidence. The same hair, same eyes, same nose and mouth. I feel, somehow, as if they must be something to each other. Ah, can that be it?" and he gazed intently to leeward.

Bob had hoped that he might be the one to find the *Esmerelda*, but the honor was carried off by Ben, for suddenly his sweet, girlish voice rang out:

"A wreck to leeward."

Bob and Yawpey hastened to Ben's side, and following with their eyes the direction his finger pointed out, they saw the dismantled hull of a vessel, two stumps of masts still uprearing themselves from its deck.

"Eureka!" cried Bob, "'tis the *Esmerelda*."

"Yah," chimed in Yawpey. "Hurroo!" and standing on his head he beat a tattoo on the partition with his heels.

"I surely hope it is," quietly said Ben.

"It is her without doubt," said Bob. "And our fortunes are made."

CHAPTER XV.

GRUMBLING JOE—PAT HARRIS.

It was with a heavy heart that the captain of the *Stanwix* ordered the vessel to be laid to her course, when, the morning having arrived, nought was to be seen of Ben Bolt.

Something in the lad's ways and manners had won from the captain a feeling of deep interest and affection.

And so he grieved at the lad's loss, but not more deeply than did the Grumbler, who, too, had learned to love the gentle-mannered, whole-souled, kind-hearted Ben Bolt.

Joe was transferred from the fore-castle to the cabin, to fill poor Ben's position.

Jim Devon, the detective, although he had seen Joe at work on deck, had never met him face to face, but when he appeared as cabin boy, the detective, as was habitual with him, scanned the lad from head to foot.

"He looks wonderfully like old Drew," muttered the detective. "And very much like that boy of Pat Harris's, that is providing it is his, which I doubt very much. I must question the lad a little at the first opportunity that presents."

The next day when Joe was at leisure, Jim Devon approached and opened the conversation by asking him how he liked his new position.

"Much better than I did the old one," replied Joe.

"I suppose so—it's easier," said the detective, and then in a careless way asked: "do you intend making a sailor of yourself? Are you going to follow the sea for a living?"

"That is hard telling," replied Joe. "I am but a waif on the ocean of life, and circumstances probably will decide upon that."

"Let me see," said Devon, reflectingly, "you once told me something of your past life, I believe?"

"Never to my knowledge."

"Then you didn't tell me that your parents had died in your infancy?"

"No, sir."

"I can hardly be mistaken," said the detective, glancing sharply and shrewdly at the lad and drawing him out unawares to himself.

"But you are," persisted Joe. "Because my parents are living."

"In New York?" The tone was one that well-fitted a careless questioner, but Devon knew that to evince a too decided interest in the lad would perhaps keep him silent.

"Yes."

"In business, then, I presume?"

"Yes," answered Joe, a little surprised at this lengthy questioning.

"You used to help him around the shop?"

"Yes."

"Seems to me I remember your father—he keeps a gin-mill in Water Street—his name is Black. Am I right?"

Joe dumbly nodded assent.

"Two fellows sometimes used to come there, one called Pat Harris, the other David Brooks; do you know them?"

"I know Pat Harris, but I don't the other."

"He's a short, slender, dark-faced fellow."

"I remember him, but they called him Snipper," returned Joe.

"It's just as I suspected," said the detective, half to himself; and then he went up on deck, and when Joe went up a few minutes later, he saw Devon sitting in the shade of the gunwale, evidently in deep thought.

Meanwhile the *Stanwix* had been gayly dancing over the waves toward her destination. The divers began

unpacking their apparatus and putting together a huge raft from which they were to work, it being unhandy to make a descent or ascent to or from the vessel's deck.

An observation was had, the result of which was that her course was changed a few points, and about midnight the *Stanwix* was "laid to."

Observations again taken the next day showed that they were within a mile of the spot where the *Esmerelda* had gone down.

The raft was launched that afternoon, and the air-pumps and such other articles as were necessary were put on board.

No breeze of any account was stirring, and the work progressed rapidly.

The divers were all ready, and it was mutually agreed that the first descent should take place the next morning at daybreak.

The first haze of morning had barely given place to the slender threads of red which shot up above the horizon, when the two divers descended to the raft.

Their suits were donned, and with an enormous weight of lead attached to their feet, for when paying out chain to anchor the raft they had found out that the water was of great depth, they stepped to the edge of the raft.

The air-tubes were attached to the helmets, and both they and the signal cords were coiled up to a nicety to prevent fouling.

Then Barry Benjamin, the veteran diver, who was in charge of the work, held up his hand as a signal that all was ready.

All was still as death, the spectators that lined the side of the *Stanwix* holding their breath as they saw these two men about taking their lives in their hands in descending beneath the water on their perilous mission.

Barry's companion, Garry House, also signified that he was ready, and then, clasping hands, they were held an instant over the side of the raft, up to their middle in the sea; then, at the word of command, they were let go, and sank like a shot out of sight just as three rousing cheers arose from those on the vessel's deck, who thus showed their admiration of the courage of the two men.

They shot downward with inconceivable rapidity for a few moments, and then as the water became more dense they went slower, and by the time the bottom was reached their progress had almost ended.

They were weighted not an ounce too much.

For a time they could see nothing at all, but as their eyes became more accustomed to the darkness, they saw stretching away on all sides a smooth bottom, but no wreck adorned its surface.

They were standing side by side, when suddenly House caught Benjamin by the arm, and pointed where, shimmering, flashing, dwindling, alternately like a star, which, as we gaze at it disappears only to instantly reappear—a light shone.

In character only it resembled the star, for the light was of a mellow nature, such as the sun gives when refracted through a dense body of water.

And it was at no great distance.

Puzzled beyond expression was Benjamin, but he nevertheless determined to investigate, and when he gave one of a series of signals previously agreed upon, the long boat was lowered, and the air-pumps, which never for a moment could be stopped, were transferred to her stern sheets.

A picked crew manned the oars, and when all was ready a signal to that effect was transmitted to the diver.

Then came back the command, "go due east, but very slowly."

And as the long-boat followed the instructions given the two men so far beneath them walked slowly toward the light which began growing more distinct, and began to glow steadily.

It was a tedious journey, this walking beneath the sea hampered with the life-lines and air-tubes.

They approached nearer—two stumps of masts outlined by the light first caught their eyes, then they saw the dismantled hull, and back of that was outlined the *Demon*. As they came nearer, they saw two figures clad in armor, while inside the pilot-house of the strange craft was a thing that danced around and in pantomimic show endeavored to inform them that the *Esmerelda* already had a claimant, a *prior* one.

The divers from the *Stanwix* signaled the long-boat to stop, and then remained in their own footsteps, dumbfounded, glancing occasionally toward the, to them, inexplicable phenomenon of a vessel beneath the sea containing human living beings, and then peering into each others' eyes through the glass plates in their helmets, as if endeavoring to read each other's thoughts.

* * * * *

Pat Harris and his worthy associate found the duties attached to the office of prime minister to a cannibal king, and an irascible one at that, were not very pleasant or light.

Although they had placed masts in the canoes of the king, and constructed sails for them from a coarse grass matting and gave other exhibitions of their ingenuity, they found that the attempt to teach the old cannibal "chip talk" was a failure.

He was too dumb to comprehend the principle, although he was satisfied, from coming so much into contact with the whites, that they were only ordinary men, excepting that their skin was paler than his own, and this he perhaps attributed to accident; and in his own tribe complexion varied so much that while some were of a light tan-color, others were almost negroes in complexion.

His failure to acquire the art of "talking with chips" exasperated him, as he laid it entirely to his prime ministers, thinking that they did not care to impart the secret to him.

The language of these islanders was of the most ru-

dimentary kind, and it took the whites but a few days to pick up the names of all the articles they used, and this acquired they could soon communicate, at least to a limited extent, their thoughts to the king.

In disgust with his narrow mind, which could not remember for one hour which was "A" or "B," Pat at last told him it was useless, he could not learn it.

This was an insult to his intelligence, and waxing terribly wroth, the king informed them, in unmistakable language, that unless they taught him the mystic art inside of a week they would form the basis of a feast to be given before attacking their inveterate enemies, the Caujoes, a tribe inhabiting a neighboring island.

This was not pleasant to listen to, and with crest-fallen faces the two ruffians bowed themselves from the presence of the king as quickly as they consistently could.

Pat, the next day, set about teaching the king his letters, and with death ahead in case of failure, he strove hard, and met with some slight success.

Three days passed, and the king was highly delighted with the progress he was making, when a new complication arose which again put a threatening aspect on the state of affairs.

A native found a body on the beach.

It was that of an old man, whether white or black was a question that could not be answered, as decay had done its work in a great measure.

The lips, shrunk to a nothingness almost, in drawing back disclosed teeth solid and sound, but much yellowed by contact with the water.

Such teeth in so old a man excited the native's admiration, and he bent over to look at them. He took hold of them, when, to his horror, they all came out.

Dropping them in terror, he fled the spot, and going to the king, he related the circumstance which resulted in the inspection of the corpse and the teeth by the whole tribe. Pat and his companion standing by and enjoying silently the comments of the thunderstruck natives at teeth that could be taken out at will.

But their tune was changed when the king signified that he would like to examine their mouths.

Now it so happened that Pat's upper teeth were almost all false, he having had them made at one time when closely pursued for a crime he had committed, as a partial means of disguising himself.

The king himself was toothless or almost so, but the stumps of a few teeth remaining in either upper or lower jaw.

Pat's teeth came out when he took hold of them.

He asked some questions, and when informed that they had been made to replace the natural ones, he signified his desire that they should make him a set.

In vain Pat pleaded his inability. The king's fiat had gone forth—they must be made in two days; if they were not, they would be roasted for the feast.

Pat explained that they had no teeth to commence with, thus hoping to nonplus the king; but in some things he was very shrewd, and without an instant's hesitation, replied that he, Pat, had yet some very fine ones left in his jaws, as also had his companion.

The king deputed a committee of six of his subjects to act as dentists, and seizing the two white men, they commenced extracting their teeth, which, being whiter than those in the mouths of any of the natives, he desired more.

The fellows were not practical dentists nor had any of the tools usually employed in extracting teeth, but with some nails taken from pieces of boards that had washed ashore, part of the debris of some wreck perhaps, they managed to pry out one of Pat's molars amid much yelling, howling and cursing from that individual, which mingled with a like string of profanity which emanated from the lips of his companion in misery, who too was in the hands of these new professors of dentistry.

At last they were permitted to go with bleeding mouths and sore jaws, Pat minus three teeth, his companion destitute of four, that had adorned his mouth previously.

The king fearing that they would attempt to escape, set a guard over them, but late in the night, as preconcerted between them, they made a dash at the guard—upset the two—and started for the beach where the canoes were.

They shoved the largest and best sailing one into the water and jumped in. A breeze favored them, and although followed they soon dropped their pursuers astern. Whither they were going they knew not; all they wanted to do for the present was to keep clear of the cannibals.

The light of the second day had but just come in when a sail was seen coming toward them, and at the peak floated the black flag that betokened her a freebooter. The pirate captain picked them up, and learning who they were, at their proposition received them with open arms as fitting and welcome additions to his cut-throat crew.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON BOARD THE WRECK.

Bob seized the wheel, brought the *Demon* about and headed her toward the wreck.

He stopped her not many feet distant of it, and sank her until she rested on the bottom, which at this point was nearly level, and composed for the most part of shale and rock of a silicious character, interspersed with a soft sandstone. This latter did not resist the wearing action of the water, and when Bob and Yawpey approached the wreck a short time later they found that in the century or more during which the *Esmerelda* had lain quietly at rest, the particles of sand worn off, carried by the sea as it eddied around, had built a bank of sand nearly to her deck, while the hold was half filled by the sandy sediment that had deposited itself there.

Bob had not come out to institute the search for the

treasure but merely to satisfy himself that the divers from the *Stanwix* had not yet found the wreck or set foot upon it.

They returned to the *Demon*, and leaving Yawpey to take his "trick at watch," Bob and Ben retired to their respective bunks, and were soon soundly sleeping. Visions of near-by wealth floating ran through the former's mind, while through that of the latter there danced a fantasy that made Joe, the Grumbler, and our hero appear as one person.

After allowing them to sleep six hours, Yawpey awoke them, and then laid down himself, while Bob and Ben rigged themselves up in the sea-suits and went outside, and wended their way to the *Esmerelda's* deck.

They remained out nearly an hour, by the expiration of which time they were compelled to return by the fetidity of the supply of air in their knapsacks.

Bob and Yawpey, sometimes Ben, made frequent excursions to the wreck, but did not accomplish anything in the way of recovering anything of value, although they became assured that they had not gone astray, that they had really found all that remained of the *Esmerelda*.

It happened in this wise:

On the third trip to the wreck Bob penetrated to the cabin.

As he passed inside the cabin door and stepped upon the still remaining companionway, whose steps were covered with sand, he ran against something that toppled over and fell to the bottom.

Going down to the cabin floor, on which were several feet or more of the sandy deposit, he stooped and began feeling around for the object he had toppled over.

And instant later his hand came into contact with a human skull.

At first he knew not what it was, but holding it up between him and the few rays of light that penetrated down the companion, he saw, first a hideous mouth that, open as it was, seemed to grin in his face, and next the empty cavernous recesses which had held the eyes of a living man, but which now seemed to leer at him in a way supernatural.

Bob was not superstitious, but bring a human skull under almost any circumstances so suddenly upon a person, and he will be apt to shudder a little.

Dropping it, he went slowly forward until his knees struck an article which he rightly conjectured to be a table, and on feeling it his hand encountered the sharp, square edge of a box, which, unearthed, proved to be a compass.

This he took back with him to the *Demon*, and a scrutiny revealed in yet traceable characters, on a corroded brass plate, the word, *Esmerelda*.

Thus was the identity of the wreck proven.

Bob and Ben visited the wreck again later, leaving Yawpey behind.

They descended to the hold, and each commenced exploring around on his own hook.

Ben's search led him near the cabin bulkhead, reaching which he paused.

The depth of the deposit was not as much here as it was directly beneath the open hatches, and Ben stooped, and with his hands began drawing aside the sand.

Soon he had a large hole made, and standing in this he dug away at the sides, widening and deepening it at the same time.

It was slow and tedious work, and getting disgusted with it, he was about giving up when his fingers came against something that offered positive resistance to them.

"What was it?"

Could it be a portion of the treasure?

Animated by the hope that it was, Ben flung the sand away to either side, and at length could feel the square corner of a box.

He dug down until one side was entirely free, and then getting his fingers under the edge he braced himself and drew up on it with all his strength.

It refused to yield.

Then he took more sand from about it, tried again, and it started.

Taking the box in his arms, which even at that distance beneath the surface was very heavy, he carried it along until he was beneath the hatchway.

Then he paused and not knowing where Bob was, he approached the side of the vessel and struck sharply on the planking.

Sounds are heard with great facility under water, and Bob, who was forward, heard and responded to them immediately, and thinking that perhaps he was wanted, made his way aft.

Arriving at Ben's side, that person picked up and placed in his arms the box he had found, which was about thirty inches long, twelve wide and eight deep.

They clambered on deck, taking the box with them. Bob wanted to ask where he had found it; but of course he could not ask him in words.

By gestures he endeavored to ask the question, but could not.

Ben, although he knew not and could not imagine what Bob was trying to say, understood that he was endeavoring to make him comprehend something.

This set him to thinking, and suddenly up came his hands and holding them so that Bob could see every motion of his fingers, he rapidly spelled out in the deaf and dumb alphabet these words:

"Do you understand this?"

"Yes," was the answer Bob returned as quick as a flash.

The difficulty of communication was solved.

Questions were asked and answers given, and in company they descended, and a short while later reappeared with a companion box.

As Bob turned his gaze toward the *Demon* he saw Yawpey prancing around and making motions as if to them.

They did not see the divers of the *Stanwix* behind

them, and imagined Yawpey's extravagant pantomime was intended for them.

With a wave of his hand toward the vessel, Bob descended again, followed by Ben.

Meanwhile, the two divers, Benjamin and House, had partially recovered from their astonishment, and, satisfied that no matter how strange the circumstances which surrounded, they had only to deal with human beings, as the boys disappeared in the *Esmerelda's* hold, they signaled the boat to go ahead.

Slowly they approached the wreck, and gaining its deck they stopped the long boat and commenced walking about.

At length House caught hold of the boxes.

Hefting one as he picked it up, he pulled his companion sharply by the arm to draw his attention, handed it to him, and stooping, picked up the other.

Yawpey, who from the pilot-house, saw them pick up the boxes, danced around like a crazy man, but could do nothing, since there were but two diving suits on board the *Demon*.

Benjamin laid down the box he had received from House, and drawing a heavy knife from a sheath by his side he sought to force it open.

Just at this moment Bob mounted to the deck followed by Ben, carrying between them a third box of the same description as the preceding two.

Bob started violently, as, partially turning he saw the two figures close beside him.

He was amazed, not so much by their being there, but that they had come so unexpectedly.

His feelings of astonishment gave way to anger when he saw that they were engaged in forcing open the boxes, the fruits of their toil.

His blood fairly boiled at the cool robbery.

He hesitated a moment and glanced askance at Ben, who, as if reading the thoughts in his companion's mind, quickly spelt out:

"Don't let them rob us—go ahead—I'll back you."

Drawing their knives, they quickly advanced on the divers, who, becoming aware of their proximity and intent, rose to their feet and with drawn knives, too, they awaited the onslaught.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FIGHT.

We left Bob and Ben on the point of attacking the two divers from the *Stanwix* who had helped themselves to two of the boxes which they had found in the *Esmerelda*.

It was no more than a barefaced robbery, and regarding it as such caused Bob's blood to boil with indignation.

At first he was at loss what course to pursue, when, as the reader will remember, Ben, by the aid of the deaf and dumb alphabet, said:

"Go ahead—I'll back you."

They made a rush toward the robbers with knives ready for work.

Bob avoided the pass which Benjamin made at him, and quickly closing in he grasped him in such a way as to pinion his arms to his side. Garry House his companion, would have advanced to aid his comrade had not Ben at this juncture claimed his attention.

Ben, who was averse to unnecessarily shedding human blood, bethought himself of trying to intimidate his opponent, and this he successfully accomplished by holding up his right hand, containing his knife, and pointing at it with his left forefinger, at the same time touching the spring that sent its long, keen blade flashing in the light's rays, out to its fullest extent.

Involuntarily, as it caught his eyes, House shrank back.

Following up his advantage, Ben followed the retreating figure.

House kept backing away, retreating in a semi-circle until finally he approached the open hatchway of the wreck. Soon his heels struck the rotten combing, he tumbled over backwards and disappeared.

Returning to where Bob stood he found the two battling fiercely. Both had lost their knives and were now struggling wildly for supremacy.

It was an odd sight.

Hampered by their diving suits, with their motions necessarily slow from the density of the water, it might have struck an observer as being a very tame affair when compared with the quick, light motions of two angry combatants fighting on terra firma.

Watching his opportunity Ben rushed in and seized hold of Bob's antagonist. With a quick motion of his hand, which informed his companion of his thoughts, they both ran him toward the hatchway.

House was just crawling out when the lads chucked Benjamin over. He struck on House's head and both went toppling back into the hold of the wreck.

Bob took one of the boxes which the divers had stolen, Ben the other, and with them they quickly retreated toward the *Demon*.

After depositing them by the sea-door, they hurried back and secured the third box just as the two divers, who were astonished at the *contredans* that had taken place, and being much alarmed by its character, gave the signal to be drawn up, were appearing above the hatchway.

A moment later they had disappeared surfaceward.

Between them they carried the box to where they had left the other two; then they entered the exit chamber, taking all three inside.

The water was forced out, the door opened, and they stepped inside.

With high-beating hearts the suits were quickly removed, the boxes brought in.

A hatchet, that happened to be lying near by Bob seized with feverish eagerness.

Standing one of the boxes on edge, he speedily pried up its lid.

He laid it flat, and inserted his fingers in the space he had just made.

Bracing himself, he pulled upwards with all his might.

The nails which had secured the cover must have been somewhat corroded by lying covered with seawater, for they suddenly let go, and as Bob struck the floor in a forcible manner he had not counted on, the lid went flying off the opposite side.

Ben and Yawpey, meanwhile, had come closer, and with eager and expectant eyes had awaited the uncovering of the box.

As Bob sat down and the lid flew off, a simultaneous cry of joy escaped their lips which informed Bob that his hopes had been realized, that they really were in possession of a portion of the *Esmerelda's* coveted wealth.

So eager, too, was he to gaze upon the contents of the box that he waited not to rise farther than on his knees, when he crawled up to it.

A glad cry dropped from Bob as his eyes struck upon the neatly-arranged rows of gold pieces. It was full, completely so.

The top pieces were a little dimmed, but under, the gold was as bright and fresh as when it came from the mint.

In his excitement he seized hold of the box, and, unintentionally upset it, which sent the gold rolling all around, flashing and scintillating in the rays of the electric lamp which was suspended in the center of the room.

Yawpey, the irrepressible, capered round like an escaped lunatic, shouting:

"By the jumpin' Jehosaphat—rich, rich; just think of it. Yawpey Dick ain't a nigger, and is rich—rich—rich—rich; bully for the old hermit, bully for Bob, bully for Ben, and—hurrah for the *Demon*. Hip, hip, hurrah!"

In this last Bob and Ben both joined.

Never before had three happier boys been congregated together.

At Ben's suggestion Bob opened the two remaining boxes, and found that they, too, were filled to repletion with bright, yellow gold pieces.

"Yawpey, pick up the gold," said Bob, at last, pointing at those that he had spilled from the first opened box.

"Yah," returned Yawpey, "I'll do it. Look at it—ain't it pretty—listen?" He stooped and picking up several pieces, allowed them to fall to the floor, on striking which they jingled merrily. "Don't it sound nice? Hurroo! Hurroo!"

With a glance of his disapproval of his noisy manifestations of delight, which silenced Yawpey, Bob proceeded to re-fasten the gold in the boxes.

"Shall we make another visit to the wreck?" asked Ben.

"Yes, I guess so," replied Bob; "we will go on board once more before we go to the surface for fresh air. There," he added, giving the last box, which had been securely nailed, a shove which sent it into the corner, "I'm done with that. Are you ready to go?"

"Yes."

"Come on then."

As they picked up the suits, Yawpey, who had stood intently listening to the short conversation, stepped forward and said:

"Bob, ain't I to go this time?"

"No, Ben is going with me," replied Bob.

"That ain't fair," said Yawpey, sullenly.

"Why not?" demanded Bob, somewhat incensed at Yawpey's words and manner.

"Leastways it ain't," returned Yawpey, "'cept you've gi' me an equal share of what ye git, 'cos you've have all the chance to find it, and I haven't any."

"I'll do as I please about that," angrily said Bob.

"Put on your suit, Ben—hurry up—so that those other chaps do not get there before us."

They went outside, and were soon on board the wreck again.

Leaving Ben on guard on the deck, Bob descended into the hold, and did not reappear for over half an hour, but when he did he held in his arms another box of similar construction to those already found.

"What luck?" queried Ben, talking with his fingers.

"Only this," replied Bob in the same manner, at the same time kicking the box with his foot.

"There's too much sand to do much with our hands, and we must find some other method of removing it if we can."

"Shall we go back?"

"Yes; take hold."

Ben assisted Bob in carrying the box, and together they returned to the *Demon's* side.

They stepped into the exit chamber with the box.

The next moment—but not by their doing—the sea-door glided shut, and the water was forced out.

Presently they felt that the *Demon* had risen from the bottom, and was making headway.

To Bob this was inexplicable; but we can explain it by returning to the time when they had started for the wreck the last time.

Bob's answer nettled Yawpey, and besides it involved an uncertainty as to whether the others would divide with him.

Now Yawpey at first sight of the gold had been seized with that same love for it which a miser exhibits, and after they had gone, he brooded over Bob's words until he persuaded himself that none of the wealth would come to him.

Then why not keep what they had on board the *Demon*? Why not hide it for himself?

But where?

There was no place on board the boat where so much bulk could be placed and escape detection.

Why not run away with it, as well as the *Demon*?

The thought took forcible possession of Yawpey's mind, and at last overcome by it, he stepped into the pilot-house, and not daring to look toward the wreck where he thought the two were, whom he was about to desert, he pulled the knob which closed the sea-door and exhausted the water from the chamber.

Then he raised and started her away from the spot.

"I wonder what the matter is?" was Bob's first exclamation as he unloosened his helmet and laid it aside. "I must see."

Yawpey's resolution to desert his comrades was more frail than lasting.

The thought that Bob had saved him from death on more than one occasion, and that to desert them meant death to them—made him waver—and repent. Then, overpowered by his better self, he turned her squarely about, and as Bob, followed by Ben, dashed into the pilot-house the *Demon* settled down into almost the same position she had been lying in a few minutes before.

To Bob's angry inquiries Yawpey gave stumbling, evasive answers, which aroused Bob's suspicions as to the true reason.

He deemed it best, though, to give Yawpey the benefit of the doubt, and so kept his suspicions to himself.

The box was opened, and found to also contain gold, which ascertained, Bob placed it beside the others.

Then he thought it would be better to return to the surface for air, and said so.

"But how about the wreck?" queried Ben. "Those divers may come down while we are gone."

"That's so," said Bob, reflectively. "One of us ought to remain as a guard. I'll do so myself. You can work the boat almost if not quite as well as I can, Ben, so you take her to the surface, and I'll remain behind; but don't stay longer than you can help, for the air I shall have to take out is not of the purest."

"Just as you say," returned Ben.

Bob assumed his armor and went outside, after which Ben raised the *Demon*, and after proceeding a short distance under water, so that they would not come out to the surface anywhere near the *Stanwix*, he drew Pull 5 to its fullest extent, and they shot rapidly upward.

Yawpey meanwhile had ascended the stairs to the deck door, and as the ceasing of the throbbing of the pumps informed him that they had reached the surface, he touched the spring, and the door glided back, just as a warning cry from Ben struck his ear.

What did it mean?

Was it danger?

And from what?

These three questions assailed Yawpey at one and the same time, and while in a state of uncertainty concerning what next to do, he saw a shadow fall across him.

He had taken a step upward previously, and his head was about on a level with the deck. As he glanced upward, he saw a face with wicked, glittering eyes, peering into his own, and the next moment was seized by the collar, and despite his struggles was drawn up on deck.

By a lucky accident his foot struck a spring, which sent the door back to its place, and Ben, from the pilot-house, saw Yawpey in the hands of his captors.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PIRATE.

The pirate vessel, on board of which Pat Harris and his companion found themselves, was appropriately called the *Black Devil*.

She was in structure long and narrow, with a lengthy, sharp prow, with a high cutwater.

She was painted a jet black, not being relieved by even a single streak of any color.

As a sailer she had never found her match, being able, if there was any breeze at all stirring, to even distance first-class steamers.

Once she had been overhauled by an English cruiser but a well-concocted story, and the exhibition of clearing papers, which had been stolen from a vessel robbed and scuttled but a few days' previous, completely blinded the English captain as to her true character, and the pirate was permitted to pursue her way unmolested.

Thomas Darrell was the name the *Black Devil's* captain gave himself.

The day after Pat Harris joined the crew, the English man-of-war that had been seen by the boys on board the *Demon*, and whose pompous captain they had given a ducking, sighted the *Black Devil*, and immediately ran up her colors.

But there was a good stiff breeze at the time, and having unbounded faith in his vessel, Captain Darrell deigned not to notice the cruiser.

"Damme!" muttered Captain Puffer, the commander of the man-of-war. "But these fellows are mighty huncivil, hand don't appear to care a straw for the English flag. Blast their heyes, but hi'll make them dance hif they don't be careful. Lieutenant Dobson—hey, lieutenant."

"Aye, aye, sir," replied that individual, advancing and touching his cap.

"I'm mad!"

"Aye, aye, sir," said the lieutenant, smiling to himself at the aptness of his reply.

"I'm mad—hi say mad, because that whippersnapper dares to treat our great flag with contempt."

"Aye, aye," put in the lieutenant, as his superior paused.

"Hand hi want to chase him down, sir, chase him down; hand hif you get 'an hopportunity, put a bullet through 'em. Hunderstand?"

"Aye, aye," and walking away, the lieutenant gave the necessary directions.

The chase began early in the morning, and, although there was a good breeze, the man-of-war began to gain, and before nightfall was near enough to bring her long range gun to bear on the pirate.

Of a half dozen shots fired before darkness settled down, one took effect, and that at the water-line.

The leak thus formed was immediately stopped by a temporary plug inserted from the inside. The pirate captain changed his vessel's course, and when morning broke the English cruiser was nowhere in sight.

After cruising about several days, the temporary plug came out, and about the same time that the fact was reported to Captain Darrell, came another report that the vessel was in sight, and without sails spread, and apparently lying at anchor.

As the reader will instantly guess, this newly-discovered vessel was the *Stanwix*.

Darrell immediately went on deck and scrutinized the stranger long and closely. The circumstance of her lying there, apparently not in distress, and with no particular object to keep her there, seemed odd to the pirate captain.

Still, thinking that perhaps she might prove valuable game for them, he determined to lay to, and, after repairing damages, proceeded to interview her.

The *Black Devil* was laid to, and her long boat lowered, containing, among others, Pat Harris, who was something of a carpenter.

They had just begun work on the leak, when one of the men suddenly cried out:

"See there! What in thunder's this thing?"

His cry drew all eyes to where he was pointing, right alongside the long boat.

It was the top of the pilot-house of the *Demon* appearing above the water.

She came up exactly beneath them, and lifted the long boat from the water.

Pat Harris, and several others immediately stepped upon her deck, and as Yawpey sent the deck-door back and stepped upward, as Ben's ringing cry of warning rang out, Pat seized the lad by the collar, and, with the assistance afforded by his companions, drew him on deck.

They would have rushed down the stairs had not Yawpey accidentally sent the door back into its place.

Ben for a moment was paralyzed by the occurrence, but, recovering himself, he drew Pull 1, and the *Demon* glided away from the spot.

"To the boat," cried Pat Harris, who, having seen the *Demon* before, and knowing of some of her characteristics, did not care to be soured in the water.

They threw Yawpey into the boat, and, pushing her off, jumped in and rowed back to the *Black Devil*, which by this time was about a quarter of a mile distant.

Ben went half a mile further before he stopped the *Demon*, and then, after fully assuring himself that he could not be molested, he opened the deck-door and allowed the light, fresh, crisp air displace that which was confined in the vessel.

The stock of air renewed, Ben sank his vessel, and, having taken his bearings, started back toward the wreck which Bob had remained to guard.

But how fared Bob during this time?

To understand what happened to him during this period we must accompany the two frightened divers, who, after being thrown in the *Esmerelda's* hold, gave the signal to be drawn up.

After reaching the surface, and clinging to the stem of the boat until she reached the raft, they were taken up and their suits removed.

Their story was listened to with interest; but when they mentioned the fact of a boat lying there with lights which threw an almost noonday glare over everything, an incredulous smile lit up the faces of all.

"Impossible," said one.

"They're lying or crazy," said another.

"They're playing some deep game," suggested one.

"Perhaps they've found the treasure easy of access and want this project abandoned so that they can return for it themselves."

"A boat that can stay under water—nonsense!"

Seeing that their story was not believed, the divers reasserted the truth of what they had stated.

"Dimond, are you willing to go down alone?" at length asked Benjamin.

"Yes," replied the diver, a dare-devil sort of a fellow who cared naught for man or devil. "And I'll prove that you fellows are wrong," he added an instant later.

"All right, do so," said Benjamin, shrugging his shoulders.

He was speedily equipped for the journey, and some minutes later came a splash and a gurgle as he disappeared from the raft.

He had been given directions as to the precise location of the wreck, and started for it as soon as he touched the bottom.

Soon he sighted it, and he chuckled inwardly when, on looking around, the wonderful craft of his associate diver's story was not to be seen.

He boarded the wreck, and by a preconcerted arrangement of signals telegraphed back the news:

"On board the wreck and all right."

Bob, as soon as the the *Demon* was lost in the distance, descended into the hold of the wreck, and making his way to where they had found the treasure, began examining the surroundings as well as he could, at the same time cudgeling his brains for a quick method of removing the sand which covered the buried wealth.

Dimond, after walking around the deck for a few minutes, found the hatchway, and also descended, and had happened to take the direction that led him to the spot where Bob was standing taking a rest.

Bob's back was turned toward the hatchway and he did not see Dimond's approach, while if he saw the dark form before him he mistook it for a stanchion, for he came right ahead, and finally stretching out his hand rested it on Bob's shoulder.

The latter shook off the hand, and instantly wheeled squarely about, bringing them face to face.

Dimond instinctively recoiled at this unexpected event, and both naturally clasped their knives.

Bob made a menacing gesture, and advanced to attack Dimond with such alacrity that the latter fell back as fast as the other advanced.

In keeping his face to his foe, Dimond failed to back away in a straight line, and deviated so much as finally to step into the corner formed by the bulkhead and the vessel's side.

As his right foot came down he felt that it had stepped on something more yielding than the sand, and almost instantaneously he felt his left leg seized and pinched as if in a vise.

What was this new danger which menaced him?

Glancing downward he saw a greenish glittering pair of eyes fixed upon him.

And Bob, advancing, was also seized hold of by this monster of the sea, and so fierce was the grip he almost cried with pain.

Mutual danger made the enemies' cause a common one, and turning their attention to their foe they began slashing away at him with their knives.

The struggle occupied but a few minutes, but it was a terrific one. Bob's better-formed knife finally giving him the finishing blow.

Together they dragged their defunct antagonist out to the stronger light, and a shudder convulsed both as they gazed on the monster, who greatly resembled a lobster in construction, but with nippers and jaws as thick as any ordinary man's arm, the fins or feelers fringing his body floating out on both sides of his long body like huge snakes.

It was on one of these that Dimond had stepped and so enraged it as to cause it to attack him.

Now, that their common enemy was dead, the truce between them ceased, and with a wave of his hand Bob demanded the diver to depart.

Dimond deemed it best to accede to this demand and gave the signal to be drawn up, and soon left Bob alone.

Meanwhile the air in his helmet had been rapidly deteriorating in quality, and he began to wish for the coming of the *Demon*.

He went on deck and sat down.

Minutes passed away, and still the *Demon* had not returned.

The air was by this time very heavy, and Bob could scarcely respire, and in fact he breathed it in a quick, gasping manner.

But, at last, his eyes were greeted by the light of the electric lamp, and soon the *Demon* settled down but a few feet distant.

He hurried to her, found entrance, and when his helmet was removed, listened with astonishment to the story of Yawpey's capture.

CHAPTER XIX.

BEN MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARS.

Bob was much surprised to hear of Yawpey's capture, but who the capturers could be he could not conceive.

Meanwhile Yawpey had been conveyed to the *Black Devil*, and at that very time was surrounded by the motley cut-throat crew, while Captain Darrell plied him with questions.

When questioned concerning the *Demon*, Yawpey maintained absolute silence, when Pat Harris broke in, and gave the captain all the information he could concerning her.

The listeners could scarcely believe in the existence of such a vessel, although with their own eyes they had seen her appear and disappear.

Yawpey then recognized in the speaker one of the white men he had seen among the cannibals.

After much threatening and the display of numerous pistols and knives, Yawpey condescended to tell the pirates of the mission of the *Demon*.

"And that vessel lying out there, I suppose she is also after the treasure?" said the captain, inquiringly.

"Yah!"

"That explains the conundrum of her staying in that self same spot so long. Well, boys,"—this to the crew—"under those circumstances we don't want to attack that fellow yet. We must wait until they recover the treasure, and then go for them heavy. Am I right?"

"Aye, aye," was chorused by the lips of all the vile wretches who heard the words.

"Come with me—you—what's your name?" he gruffly demanded.

"Yawpey."

"A good name, and suits you at all events. You come with me, and you," to Harris.

Followed by Yawpey and Harris he descended to the cabin, and after gleaming all the information possible from the two, he bent his head reflectively for a few minutes.

He rang a hand-bell on the table, when straightened up. A young boy scarce sixteen years of age answered the summons.

"Billy, conduct this fellow to the galley and turn him over to black Pete to help him in the scullery."

"Yes, sir," replied the lad, and together they ascended to the deck.

"And now, Harris, I've arranged a plan and although you are a new hand, and I am not so well acquainted with you as I am with the balance of my crew, I'm going to entrust you to carry it out," said Darrell, when the boys had disappeared.

"Anything you please, cap. I'm there every time. What's to be done?"

Darrell then unfolded his plan, which, excepting a few minor matters, which at Pat's suggestion were altered, was approved by Harry.

At the sound of the bell Billy again appeared.

"Send Thompson down," said Darrell.

Thompson soon appeared. He was the captain's right-hand man, a low-browed, hang-dog, villainous-looking fellow, and the sailing master.

Darrell also took him into his confidence, and the leak having been properly patched up, sails were loosened and shook out to the breeze, which, when the canvas was clewed home, carried them along at a fine rate.

The *Black Devil* bore down upon the *Stanwix*, passing not over a quarter of a mile distant and under her lee bow.

Having been observed by those on the *Stanwix*, they kept a sea-glass fixed on her movements, and as she crossed their bows, the captain, who was watching the stranger's movements, saw a man jump from the gunwale into the sea, and at the spot from which the man had thrown himself off, there appeared several forms who wildly brandished their arms as if threatening the unfortunate wretch.

Of the character of the vessel the captain of the *Stanwix* knew not, and when he saw her pass on without attempting to rescue the man, he ordered the cutter away to pick him up.

The cutter's crew found the man clinging to a piece of board, which apparently he had seized at the moment of jumping overboard.

They drew him in the cutter, and returned to the *Stanwix*, whose crew lined the side, their interest in the affair being wound up to the greatest pitch on account of the singularity of the circumstance.

Among those watching the approach of the cutter, was Jim Devon, the detective, who had for some days back been cursing his stupidity in coming out with the *Stanwix*.

As the rescued man stepped upon the deck, he started violently, and after screening himself behind one of the sailors, he scrutinized the man closely.

The reader will immediately form the conclusion that the rescued man was Pat Harris.

But how comes it that he jumped overboard, as if to escape some great danger which threatened him? Later on we shall reveal the reason.

"Well, said Bob, when Ben for a second or third time had minutely recounted the story; 'if Yawpey's gone, he's gone, and that's all about it. You are sure it was none of the men belonging to this diving crew that captured them?'"

"Of course; don't I know every man on board the *Stanwix*?"

"True, I had forgotten. It was good you reached here when you did, for I was beginning to feel the need of a change of air."

"I couldn't get here any quicker."

"I know," replied Bob. "Suppose we go on board the wreck again?"

"Very well; I'm with you."

They put on their suits and made a trip to the *Esmerelda*, from which they returned without having met with any success.

It now became a question as to how they were to remove the sand from off the treasure.

Various plans were proposed and rejected, none appearing feasible, until Ben said:

"I wonder if a jet—a stream of water would accomplish the task?"

This was the key that led to an elaboration of the idea, until finally they determined to try this method of removing this impediment to their search.

In the first construction of the *Demon* the hermit had thought a hose would be necessary to accomplish certain results, and so procured one.

These results he afterward obtained without its aid, and in a much simpler manner.

When sinking the vessel, as the reader knows, the water-chambers were filled with water forced into them from the sea, a short pipe running from the pump to the outside of the *Demon*, and another conducting the water from the pump to the chamber.

This latter connection Bob unscrewed, and, being a machinist, he, without much trouble, attached the hose to the pump.

He next conducted the hose out through the exit-chamber, having drilled a hole of the right size through one of its partitions, packing it round the house so that it could not leak.

He had also conducted along with it, side by side, a length of wire, and everything being in readiness for a trial, Bob put on his suit and went outside, leaving Ben inside.

He carried the end of the hose and wire on board the wreck, and with them in his hand descended into the hold, when he made the discovery that it was too short.

Still he wished to try the experiment, and gave Ben the signal to start the pump, and presently he felt the hose harden and placing his hand across the nozzle, which he had made from a glass throat such as protected the copper rods where they passed through the floor, it was instantly driven away by the stream which the powerful electric pump was forcing through it.

Stooping he placed the nozzle within a few inches of the sand, and lo! as if by magic the sand scattered, and as he followed up the rapidly deepening hole it widened and spread.

"Eureka!" cried Bob to himself. "If the hose were only long enough. If it were—but—why not bring the *Demon* closer?"

The last question flashed through his mind, and—it solved the problem.

He signaled to stop the pump, and Ben complied with the order.

Hurrying back to the *Demon*, Bob went inside and explained matters, and told Ben what he wanted done.

Then he passed outside again, and taking up his position on the deck of the wreck he signaled "all right."

Ben, inside, raised the *Demon* above the bottom, and as he slowly brought her near the wreck Bob hauled in the hose carefully, he having gone outside for the purpose of preventing its fouling during the vessel's

approach, which at a signal Ben lowered so that she lay within a half dozen feet of the *Esmerelda*.

Then Bob went into her hold, and seizing the hose dragged it with him.

It reached the spot from which they had taken the boxes, with a few feet to spare.

He signaled "start the pumps," which was speedily complied with.

He then bent over and applied the nozzle close to the sand and it spread about on all sides, the solid volume eating its downward way with great rapidity.

Finally Bob stepped into the hole, and by bending the hose, so as to apply the nozzle sideways and upwards, he enlarged it until it was three or four feet broad.

Then he deepened it again, the stream of compressed water forcing itself downward until it reached a substance which refused it progress and diffused it in all directions.

Bob played the stream about until finally, the complete outlines of another box, similar to those they had previously found, was in view.

An instant later another, and then another, and still another was uncovered.

He dropped the hose, and in his joy pranced about, somewhat in Yawpey's style.

Then he gave the order to stop the pump, and seizing one of the boxes he conveyed it outside across the deck, and the few feet that separated the *Demon* from her, and into the exit-chamber.

A minute or so later he was inside, with helmet unloosed, in wild excited tones telling Ben of the success of the scheme.

He did not stop to open the box, but, after a few minutes' rest, he went out again, and hurrying back gave the order to start the pump again. Before stopping Bob cleared away a great large space, which was completely covered with treasure.

He was wild, frantic with joy, and had not his supply of air began to fail he would not even then have given the order to cease pumping.

He gave the order—but it was not obeyed.

He waited a few minutes and gave the order again, but with no better effect.

"What can be the matter with Ben?" he thought to himself as, again giving the order, it failed.

"Something must be wrong," he murmured. "I'll go back right away;" and after fastening the end of the hose, with the wire, to one of the vessel's knees, and with another box in his arms, he returned to the *Demon*.

After removing his helmet, he shouted for Ben, but received no answer. Somewhat alarmed by the fact, he searched the *Demon* from stem to stern, but could not find a trace of Ben. It was not until he returned to the room in which the engine was, that he discovered any clew to Ben's whereabouts, the clew being afforded by the fact that the other diving suit was gone.

"He must have gone outside," muttered Bob; "but if he has it was queer that I didn't see him. Well, here goes to see where he is."

He fastened his helmet again, and going outside, he first surveyed the deck of the wreck in hopes of attaching a glimpse of the missing lad, and then descended into the hold. Back to the treasure spot he went, quite sure that there he would find Ben; but no, he was not there, and if he had been he had left no trace of the fact behind.

With a sinking heart Bob searched every nook and cranny of the wreck, but with no success.

Then he explored the bottom all about the wreck and the *Demon*, but could find no trace of his comrade.

After a fruitless search of several hours, during which Bob had returned to the *Demon* several times to arrange the electric lights, so that they would burn brighter, and to rest, the conviction forced itself upon his mind that Ben could not be found.

Sinking down, in grief at his comrade's inexplicable loss, he groaned:

"Ben is lost, and I am alone—utterly so."

Yes, Ben was lost, and mysteriously disappeared—had gone—but where?

CHAPTER XX.

WHERE BEN DISAPPEARED TO.

WHEN Dimond, the diver, was drawn to the surface, the excitement on board the *Stanwix* was intense, for his going down was to prove or disprove the almost incredible story told by Benjamin and House.

The armor was removed and he mounted from the raft to the deck, where he was immediately met by his companion divers, who, with quizzical looks, were watching him, and the captain asked:

"Well, Dimond, what is the result of your trip to old ocean's bed?"

"The result is very unimportant, I'm afraid," returned Dimond.

"Did you see the wonderful vessel spoken of by your associate divers?"

"No."

"What!" cried both Benjamin and House in a breath. "Didn't you see her?"

"No."

"Were you on board the wreck?"

"Yes."

"Did you see any one?"

"Yes."

"You see I told the truth, captain," said Benjamin, turning to that individual.

Dimond gave a detailed account of all he had seen which, while it bolstered up Benjamin's experience to some extent, belied it at other places; for Dimond had not seen the *Demon*, which, as the reader will remember, had taken a trip to the surface for fresh air, during which Yawpey had been captured.

Dimond had a wholesome dread of meeting with Bob, who had intimidated him to a great extent, and in this feeling Benjamin and House also entered fully

they not caring again to encounter the antagonists who had done for them so easily.

And so, on board the *Stanwix*, for some time, things remained *status quo*, as far as descents to the wreck were concerned, although the monotony of the situation had been broken by the rescue of Pat Harrison.

"It's too bad," said the captain, speaking to Jim Devon, "that we have come to a halt after finding the wreck and getting all ready for work. I believe, myself, that their stories are all gammon, and if they do not manifest a disposition to continue the work, inside of three hours, I shall offer a good sum to anyone who will take their places."

Joe, the Grumbler, was near enough to overhear these remarks, and without any hesitation he advanced and said:

"Captain, beg pardon for interrupting you, but I will take the place of one of the divers in case they will not go down again."

"Do you think you could stand it?"

"Yes."

"All right; I'll accept your offer on the conditions mentioned."

The captain was as good as his word, and when, after waiting three hours, the divers still refused to make a descent, he made an open offer to the whole crew for some one to fill their places.

Joe was the only one who answered, and when by stepping out he signified his readiness to go, and so exhibited his courage by daring to face the dangers feared by the practised divers, a cheer burst from the throats of all the seamen.

He descended to the raft, the armor was put on and fastened properly by the attendants, during which explanations of the system of signaling were given him, besides various other important points.

Then the visor was pulled down and fastened, and encased in armor, closed from the outside world, Joe was ready to take his first plunge in a suit of that description.

The life-lines and air-tubes were attended to and arranged in little even coils to prevent fouling, the leaden weights were attached to his feet, he was held over the side of the raft a single moment, then came a gurgling sound as the waters closed above his head, and Joe was rapidly descending to old ocean's bed.

Once down to the bottom he signaled back "all right," and then started slowly off in the direction of the wreck, which soon became visible in the glare of the light from the *Demon*.

He had doubted the stories of the divers, but here was proof that one or both was right.

As he came closer he saw a figure outlined for an instant in the light, and then it disappeared into the wreck.

A short time later he clambered on the *Esmerelda's* deck, and crossing it to the hatchway his foot struck the rubber hose which Bob was at that very moment using so successfully in uncovering the buried treasure.

Joe now turned his eyes on the *Demon*.

Long and earnestly he gazed, and once, seeing Ben moving about in the pilot-house, satisfied any doubts he might have had as to its being habitable.

After Bob had left the last time for the wreck and Ben had started the pump, he became very restless, and at last determined to don the other suit and pay Bob a visit.

With his mind once made up it took but a few minutes to array himself for the trip, and once ready he entered the exit-chamber.

Joe, who was looking with curious eyes at the *Demon*, saw a figure suddenly emerge from her side near the bottom.

He shrank back immediately behind one of the stumps of spars which screened him completely from the observation of Ben, who with slow steps advanced to the wreck and climbed upon her deck.

Ben approached the open hatchway and peered down, but of course Bob was not to be seen. Ben's back was toward Joe, and the latter suddenly conceived a plan for finding out something concerning these strange people who manned so strange a craft.

He sidled from behind his screen, first taking care to see that none of the diving apparatus had fouled in anyway, and across the few feet that intervened.

Then, just as he came within two or three feet of Ben, he gave three sharp pulls at the signal-line, which means "Great danger—pull quickly if you would save my life," and at the same time seized Ben from behind tightly about the waist, thus pinioning his arms down so that his prisoner could not use them.

Ben struggled and kicked, but it was of no use; Joe had him at a great disadvantage.

Presently they struck the surface and they were towed along to the raft, where Ben was first drawn out of the water, then Joe.

Ben would have thrown himself over, but strong hands detained him and quietly passed him up to the deck of the *Stanwix*.

"Take off the armor," said the captain.

Ready hands jumped to perform the task; it was unloosened, and as the suit was drawn off, Ben threw back the helmet and stepped forward until scarce more than two feet separated the captain and himself.

For an instant silence reigned, and then the captain shrank back, and with eyes bulging with surprise, he cried:

"Great God, are you a living reality? Are you Ben?"

"I think I am," was the lad's quiet reply.

The sailors, who are ever a superstitious class, at first sight of his face had retreated in terror, but at Ben's reply, delivered in his natural voice, they recovered somewhat and crowded forward again.

"But how came you here?" asked the astonished captain. "We thought you were drowned."

"I came very near being so—thanks to the one who pushed me overboard."

"Pushed you overboard?"

"Yes."

"Who did it?"

"That Portchey yonder," said Ben, pointing at the outside edge of the group where the guilty individual stood.

"It's a lie," shouted Portchey.

"Boatswain, arrest that man," said the captain. "And put him in the ship's prison."

Despite Portchey's struggles he was taken into custody, and then at the captain's request Ben accompanied him to the cabin, when he related the story of his adventures since being thrown into the sea. The listeners beside the captain were the ship's officers, the divers, and Jim Devon.

Joe's suit took longer to unfasten and get out of, and by the time he was rid of it Ben had descended to the cabin, whither directions had been left for him to follow.

He knew not who it was that he had captured, and when he went to the cabin, as directed, he started back in blank amazement at coming face to face with his old friend, Ben Bolt.

He rubbed his eyes, looked at the person again, then rubbed his eyes again, then looked once more.

"Is this really you, Ben?"

"Yes."

"Where did you come from?"

"I just came from the bottom of the sea."

"What? Was it you I captured?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'll be shot if this ain't a rum go."

The circumstances were explained in as few words as possible to Joe, whose joy at seeing his friend alive and well was unbounded.

"Well, Ben," at last said the captain, "there is no need of your going down again to-day. Ben's story puts a new aspect on affairs, and I want some little time to think the matter over. You may go to the fore-castle and remove all your things here, and you and Ben may occupy the disengaged state-room there. Henceforth you can both consider yourselves my guests."

"Thanks," replied both, and then Joe started to bring his personal effects to the cabin.

Jim Devon followed him on deck and kept his eyes fixed on him as he approached a group of men, among whom was Pat Harris, Joe not having seen him yet.

But presently, as Joe passed the group, his eyes roved over them until they rested on Pat Harris's face. He gave a violent start, and gazed more intently at Pat, who, raising his eyes, encountered those of Joe. He, too, was startled, and Jim Devon, by their mutual recognition, knew that he in reality had his game right in his hands.

As Joe passed Pat Harris followed, and, out of ear-shot, he whispered fiercely:

"Hark ye, Joe! on board this craft I'm Bill Hart, and if you give me away, you'll get—you know enough of me—to guess."

CHAPTER XXI.

ABOUT VARIOUS MATTERS.

THE strange sights which the divers had seen beneath the surface being divested of anything supposed to be supernatural or devilish, they determined to descend again that afternoon.

They remained below but a short time, however, not having gained access to the hold of the wreck.

The *Stanwix's* position was changed so that in descending in a straight line from the raft, the diver would land on the *Esmerelda*.

Morose and gloomy as Bob was from the loss of his companion, which, somehow, he laid to the agency of the other seekers for the treasure, he determined that, at least, as long as he could prevent it, they should never handle a particle of the wealth they were after.

In furtherance of this grim resolve, he raised the *Demon*, and, after throwing her prow partially around, he started her ahead, and finally allowed her to settle down over the hatchway of the wreck.

The *Demon* lay exactly athwart the *Esmerelda*, and the door of the exit-chamber, a result Bob had worked for, opened into the hatchway.

Dragging some broken timbers to the spot, he arranged them on top of the sand in the style of a pair of stairs, which made the ingress and egress comparatively easy.

The next move he made was to rearrange his hose and start his pump, after which he worked like a beaver, and it was not long before he had a great space entirely free from sand, which was literally paved with boxes of various sizes and descriptions.

With one of these he returned to the *Demon*, and when he opened it a cry of wondering joy broke from his lips, for the light of the electric lamp, as it struck the inside, was sent back by the variegated rays of a thousand colors, as

the precious stones gleamed and scintillated before his eyes.

There were diamonds, white and clear and without a blemish, rubies, garnets, emeralds, all, every precious stone known to mankind.

Carried away with joy he quickly put the box aside and started again for the places which had yielded him so much wealth.

We will not repeat the description of how, again and again, new treasures were added to his now almost princely store.

It was while the *Demon* was lying across this hatchway that the divers from the *Stanwix* had made their fruitless visit, for she so nearly covered the hatchway that ingress was not possible.

So after walking about on her deck and peering into the pilot-house, and satisfying their curiosity as far as possible they gave the signal to be drawn up.

Pat Harris, of course, became aware of the story of the trouble the divers had encountered from the *Demon*, and instantly connected her with the vessel which had attacked and demolished the canoes of the cannibals, and which afterward gave a number of the natives a free ride for a short way, and then went down, leaving them to swim ashore or drown as they chose.

And, moreover, Pat had seen Bob and Yawpey, and although he knew not the latter, that he knew the former he was almost positive of, but still not certain.

He had seen them but momentarily, but even that convinced him that he had seen Bob.

So that now he began to tremble for his safety, since, should Bob by any chance be brought to the surface, and catch a glimpse of him he would immediately declare his identity, and that revealed he knew that the captain of the *Stanwix* would not hesitate to take him into custody for the murder for which he had fled the country.

And Pat Harris felt uneasy, for he began to dread that he had fallen into a hornet's nest, for although Joe had so far kept silence as regarded his personality and crime, he could not count to a certainty on a continuance of it.

As for Joe, after the first surprise of the meeting had passed, he began reasoning with himself as to whether or not he should keep the murderer's secret or expose his true character.

His sense of an outraged justice at length prevailed, and he told the captain of the murder and Pat Harris's flight, a week preceding his joining the *Stanwix*.

The captain knew not who or what Jim Devon really was; still, he had long entertained an exalted opinion of the man's shrewdness, and with Joe's acquiescence, and in his presence he related the story to the detective as it had been told him.

"I know all about it, and have known ever since he first came on board," was Devon's reply, delivered in a cool, quiet manner which carried conviction with it.

"How so?" asked the captain, seriously.

"Simply because—this is a secret, mark you both—I am a detective, and came out with you in pursuit of him."

"Indeed."

"Yes—he sailed in the *Sea Gull*. You remember she sprung a leak and went down. He was one of a party of four who took a raft. As to the circumstances which led to his being on board the vessel from which he threw himself overboard, I cannot say. It's sufficient that he is here under my eyes, and within arm's length."

"What do you advise?"

"Leave him be. He doesn't know me, and imagines himself secure. So, Joe, be careful not to frighten the bird, and keep mum on what I've said."

At this juncture the conversation was broken up by the entrance of one of the subordinate officers, who had business with the captain.

And now, with the reader's permission, we will take a fleeting glance at our old friend—Yawpey Dick, whom we have, perhaps, neg-

lected a little in leaving him in the background so long.

After reaching the deck of the pirate vessel, he was surrounded by a curious, gaping crowd, who perpetrated coarse jokes on his personal appearance; some of the more bold, at intervals, advancing, and with a coil of rope signifying their intention of taking the dimensions of Yawpey's huge mouth, or tweak his nose and ears, or something of the sort.

For some days he was the common laughing-stock and football of the whole crew, he having, since being in the galley, to come into contact with all of them.

And especially did he form merriment for the huge negro who presided over the cooking.

"I say, where you get all dat mouf?" asked the negro, the question being called forth by seeing Yawpey open it, and, without a bit of difficulty, place a whole potato therein.

"None of yer business, old Tarball," snarled Yawpey in reply.

"It 'ud make a nice spittoon—haw! haw! haw!—ho! ho! ho!" and pleased at having uttered what he considered an excellent retort, Tarball laid back in his chair and gave vent to a hearty horse-laugh.

"Yer'd oughter use it sometime," said Yawpey, slightly wincing at the comparison.

"So I will," replied Tarball.

And so he did; for during the afternoon, Yawpey, seized with a gaping fit, stretched his jaws to their utmost extent.

Just then Tarball caught sight of him and came near, as if to attend to some duty that called him in that direction, when, suddenly, he bent forward and expectorated a small flood of nasty, tobacco-impregnated saliva, into Yawpey's mouth.

With a yell that would have done credit to a Sioux warrior, Yawpey bounded to his feet, reeled blindly a moment, and then, falling on all fours, commenced coughing and spitting in trying to clear his mouth of the disgusting stuff.

A portion of it, however, had managed to trickle downwards until it reached the partially-digested dinner he had eaten but a short while before.

Of course the reader knows the result.

During the transpiring of the scene thus far Tarball had been laughing extremely hearty, which drew some of the crew to the spot.

Seeing that he had a full audience, Tarball said, pointing at the crouching figure:

"Fore de Lord—but I nebber hab so good a time since when my brudder hab his eye scratched out by a yaller gal for who he was a tryin' to hug. He hab his mouf wide open—so," opening his own in illustration, "an'—an'—haw—haw—haw I se got to larf—I tuk it fur—haw—haw—haw—a—a—spitbox—haw—haw—haw," and doubling his arms across his stomach, he assumed a half-stooping position, and roared with laughter.

Yawpey had partially recovered, and actuated by a desire for revenge, he darted forward, and a violent push from behind sent Tarball sprawling on the floor, his face striking into the mess upheaved by his antagonist.

Then it was Tarball's turn to feel bad—and he did—for the crew chaffed him unmercifully until he rose to his feet, when his comical appearing face, which can best be described as looking as if bread and milk had been plastered on a blackboard, caused a burst of laughter from all who witnessed; but the better result attained was that thereafter they let Yawpey alone.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE "DEMON" AND THE "STANWIX."

AFTER the treasure was uncovered, Bob worked like a beaver in carrying box after box into the exit chamber, taking them inside each time when he was compelled to enter to renew his supply of air.

It was hard and tiresome work, but Bob stuck at it, fully aware that when he was compelled to take the *Demon* to the surface, the

men from the *Stanwix* would obtain a foothold on the wreck which they would most likely be able to maintain.

He stood it as long as he could, and then, hoping that the uncovered treasure in the hold of the wreck might remain undiscovered and undisturbed during his absence, he raised the *Demon* and shot up toward the surface.

But his hopes were vain.

After some reflection and consultation, the captain of the *Stanwix* informed Ben that he wanted him to descend in company with Dimond, and try and make a compromise with Bob.

So, in pursuance of this idea, at just about the same time that the *Demon* glided away from the spot, they were descending.

Ben, when he saw that the *Demon* was absent, immediately concluded that she had gone to the surface, but could not communicate this to his companion, who, availing himself of the opportunity, made his way into the hold of the wreck, on whose deck they had alighted.

Stumbling along, he at length toppled over into the excavation in the sand, and landed on top of the treasure boxes.

His fall caused an inquiry from above; the sudden tightening of the lines informing the attendants that something had happened.

He replied "all right," and picking himself up, he pranced about in as lively a manner as was consistent with his accoutrements and position. Next he picked up two of the smallest of the boxes and staggered along until he was beneath the hatchway.

Here he gave the signal to be drawn up quickly. When his head appeared above the water and they saw that Joe bore him not company, a dissatisfied expression was heard, but the next instant when the boxes were raised up and laid on the raft, and the sailors got an inkling of what they were supposed to contain, they heartily cheered the diver, who staid but long enough to have his visor opened to tell his companions of the find, and then have it replaced.

House and Benjamin of course quickly donned their suits, and only waiting long enough to take a peep into the boxes which had been opened and which were found to contain, one, precious stones, the other gold, they descended.

They found the impatient Dimond waiting for them on the deck of the wreck.

Beckoning them to follow, he descended and preceded them to the treasure-spot, signifying it by a wave of his hand.

Each took up two of the boxes and tugged them beneath the hatchway, when all gave orders to be drawn up.

The three simultaneous signals created intense excitement above, extra hands were sent on board the raft, and they commenced hauling up the divers.

As it became evident that the three were near the surface, a silence as of death ensued.

The side of the *Stanwix* on which the raft lay was crowded with the sailors, who, with bated breath, gazed intently at the spot where the divers would first appear.

They reached the surface, the boxes were taken from them, amid a general sigh of relief from the on-lookers, then came three simultaneous plunges, the water gurgled and bubbled in three separate places, and they had disappeared again in the direction of the wreck.

During all this time Ben had remained on the *Esmerelda's* deck, he being unable to go to the surface, as he was clad in the diving-suit in which he had been dressed when captured.

Finally he descended into the wreck and helped get out the boxes for the divers to take to the surface.

Dimond's fall into the hole in the sand had injured him, notwithstanding he had telegraphed that he was all right.

In the excitement of finding what he shrewdly guessed was the treasure, he had not noticed it, but the pain now began to make itself more plainly felt, and the result was, that when he made another ascent he signified that he wished to be taken out of the suit.

His request was complied with and he was taken to his state-room, while Joe, with the captain's assent, assumed his place.

Rapidly and energetically the divers worked, and box after box found its way to the surface.

Joe and Ben worked together, the latter carrying the boxes beneath the hatchway and having them ready for his companion each time he came down.

It may seem as if Ben was hardly acting fair toward Bob who had saved his life in thus helping to rob him of the treasure, which by his ingenuity had first been discovered, and then uncovered.

At first Ben had not thought of this, but when he did he instantly ceased work.

He was in a quandary.

He liked both Bob and Joe—which one the best he could not say—still he owed the former a heavy debt of gratitude, and he was not taking a very nice way of paying it.

But what kept Bob away so long?

Knowing that his identity must be known on board the *Stanwix* through Ben, whom he conjectured had been captured by some of her divers, he ran only about a half mile under water, and then went to the surface.

In the excitement of the gold and jewels coming up, the little, low black hull of the *Demon* remained undiscovered for some time; but the moment it was, a boat was lowered and started off towards her in charge of the first lieutenant, Jim Devon going along as passenger, and one of the oarsmen being Pat Harris.

Once at the surface, Bob stopped the *Demon* and leaving the pilot-house he went aft and up the stairs leading to the deck-door.

Somehow it failed to answer the touch of the spring which worked it, and after trying it again and again, Bob went to the "battery-room" for a hammer.

It took him some minutes to find the article.

He had remained at the wreck longer than he should have done, and the consequence was that even this slight delay had caused the air confined in the *Demon* to become fetid so rapidly that he could scarcely breathe it.

Hammer in hand he returned to the deck-door, which in some manner had become jammed, and after a few minutes' work in gently or forcibly pounding he managed to open it.

The *Demon's* prow lay toward the *Stanwix*, and when Bob stepped out upon his vessel's deck he did not see the boat, which was within fifteen or twenty feet of him, the pilot-house acting as a shield for them.

Jim Devon, as soon as he saw Bob, thought "if I only could bring Harris, Bob and Joe all face to face, why not arrest Bob on the charge of murdering his mother and hold him until the right time comes. I'll do it."

Bob was first apprized of the nearness of visitors by a slight jar as the boat's prow touched the *Demon's* side.

The first man out of the boat was Devon, who with rapid steps neared Bob, who in his first surprise had started backwards.

"Get off this vessel," commanded Bob, at the same time preparing to make a sudden dive below stairs.

Nothing daunted by these words the detective advanced as Bob retreated, and then he said, in a low tone of voice:

"Bob Harris, I order you to surrender yourself to serve out the balance of your sentence of murder."

"Never!" yelled Bob; "get off, I tell you."

"You must surrender," and the detective, as he uttered the words, darted forward to seize Bob, who, to avoid the onset, jumped lightly aside, and ere the detective could turn about he gave him a clip that sent him into the sea.

The others in the boat becoming woke up darted at Bob, but he was too quick for them; for, darting down the stairs, he drew the door to its place in time to defeat their kind intentions in regard to himself.

He had no need of remaining on the surface any longer, for the atmosphere of the *Demon* was again pure and fresh.

He sank her before the disgusted men could return to the boat, and they received a good ducking for their trouble about Bob's welfare.

Meanwhile, on board the *Esmerelda* everything had worked swimmingly.

Bob's long absence had lost him a great amount.

As the divers descended, they saw the first faint gleam of the *Demon's* headlight, but, being in point of numbers more than a match for the inmates of the vessel, they heeded not her coming, but descended into the hold of the wreck.

From the pilot-house Bob saw the descent into the wreck, and a grim resolve entered his mind.

The divers went inside without a thought of danger, and little dreaming of how great would be that which was so soon to encompass them, they commenced gathering up the treasure boxes.

Bob put on more speed, and threw her stern around a few points.

The divers were beneath the hatchway, and was about to signal to be taken up, when a dark body glided over their heads, and there remained suspended for a minute or two, then slowly settled down over the hatchway.

For a moment they could not comprehend it, then slowly the conviction forced itself upon their minds as to what it was.

Bob, who reasoned, and rightfully, too, that others had no right to the fruits of his toil, had determined to punish those who thought otherwise, and laying the *Demon's* course properly, he ran her above the hatchway as described, and there allowed her to settle down over it, thus inclosing the divers as securely as if in a stone cell with iron bars.

The divers realized the truth instantaneously.

That they had outraged all laws of right and justice in taking the boxes that Bob had worked hard to uncover, they knew.

They had outraged the captain of the *Demon*; they were in his power, in a living tomb if he chose to make it such.

They were in his grasp—helpless—powerless—to avert any fate he might mete out to them, and the agonized thought of the imprisoned men was:

"Are we to be punished by death?"

CHAPTER XXIII.

JOE BECOMES AN INMATE OF THE "DEMON."

THE two men whom Bob had imprisoned in the *Esmerelda's* hold, fretted and fumed, and inwardly cursed the lad who had made them prisoners.

As minutes passed by their anxiety as to the disposition their captor was going to make of them silenced all other thoughts.

All he had to do was to compress the tube which brought air to them, and they would literally be in Davy Jones's locker.

The reader will remember that Ben was also with them, or, at least, was when first they were made prisoners.

He had remained down since first descending, which was now over half an hour, and as he could not remain under water over an hour without receiving a fresh supply of air, it behooved him to find some means of extricating himself from his perilous position.

Leaving the divers to keep each other company, he went forward and climbed up through the fore-hatch, and then went aft and climbed on the *Demon's* deck.

He could not see Bob in the pilot-house, as he had left it a few minutes before, but a sharp rapping on the glass speedily brought its inmate to the spot.

Bob started as he saw outside a figure, which, from being clad in the costume peculiar to the *Demon*, he knew must be Ben.

"Are you Ben?" he quickly asked, spelling out the words with his fingers.

"Yes," came the reply.

"How came you here?"

"From the *Stanwix*, and I would like to come in"—

"Are the divers below?" asked Bob, disregarding his remark.

"Yes."

"Then I can't let you in; because the exit-door is directly over the hatchway."

"But I must come in," urged Ben. "If you don't let me in I shall perish. The air in my knapsack is nearly played out."

"I can't help that. The divers have been robbing me, and I want to punish them. Did you help them?"

"Yes, I did; but you forget yourself when you talk that way. Did not I discover the wreck? did I not find the location of the treasure? and finally, did I not suggest the water-jet to uncover it?"

These words struck Bob with sledge-hammer force. He had not looked at the matter in this light before, and he could not help feeling that Ben, at least, had an equal right to the treasure.

He stopped even as he would have replied, and then asked:

"What do you propose?"

"Let the divers go on their promise not to bother you any further."

"But how?"

"Write to that effect, and pass it out to me through the sea-door."

"I'll do it," replied Bob, and as he turned away Ben went to the fore-hatch, descended and went aft until he stood beneath the sea-door of the *Demon*. A few minutes later it glided open, and Bob in his diving-suit and with a piece of white pine in his hand, appeared.

He handed the piece of board to Ben, who in turn handed it to Benjamin, who managed to read these words which had been inscribed on it in large, heavy, plain characters:

"You are in my power, but I'll release you on one condition—your promise not to interfere with the buried treasure again. Will you give it?"

Benjamin then gave it to his companion, who, after reading it, glanced at his leader, and then nodded assent in company with him.

This was conveyed to Bob, and he entered the *Demon*, followed by Ben.

His first move was to raise the *Demon*, and send her away from the hatch.

The divers were not long in giving the signal to be drawn up, they not relishing the position they had been in.

After Bob saw them disappear he stopped the *Demon*, and, backing her up, settled her down in almost the same position she had occupied before.

Then he devoted some minutes in listening to Ben's story of how he had been caught and taken to the *Stanwix*.

Then Bob led him to where the fruits of his labor, during his absence, had been piled.

To say that Ben was astonished at seeing so much wealth would be drawing it mild, for he was fairly wild with delight, and nothing would do but an immediate visit to the hold of the wreck, from which they returned much richer.

Several hours later they ate dinner, when they found that their larder was very low, so much so that it was necessary to replenish it immediately.

After finishing the meal, at Bob's suggestion, they started out to hunt up some of old ocean's delicacies.

Several hours later, laden with the fruits of a very successful hunt, they wended their way back to the *Demon*.

As they stepped upon the *Esmerelda's* deck they found a figure confronting them.

Had the divers broken their promise?

We will follow the divers, when released from their prison, and see what transpired.

Of course, by their signals, they had imparted the information that they were threatened by great danger, but refused to be allowed to be drawn up, which puzzled the captain of the *Stanwix* very much, since he knew not the nature of the perils which encompassed them.

The excitement among all on board was

greatly relieved when at last came the signal to "draw up."

As soon as they were relieved from their diving costumes, they told the story of their imprisonment and the promise that had been extorted from them.

The captain could not but believe that there was something of romance connected with the story, and said so.

"All right, captain," said Benjamin; "believe as much or little as you please; I wash my hands of the entire affair, and shall not endanger my life by another descent until the *Demon*, as Ben calls her, and her occupant has left these waters."

"Where is Ben?" suddenly inquired the captain; Benjamin's allusion to that individual having brought him to mind.

"He stayed down with his former companion, and I suppose is on board the *Demon*," returned the diver.

The captain was greatly vexed at the turn affairs had taken, and tried to urge the divers to make another descent, but none of the arguments he used could change their determination, and they stubbornly refused all and every proffer he made them.

At last, out of patience, he said:

"A pretty set of cowards, you are. Why here is Joe—a boy only—who, I'll guarantee, will brave what you dare not."

The conversation had taken place in the cabin, in the presence of Joe and the officers of the ship, and turning to that lad the captain asked:

"Joe, am I right? Will you go down?"

"Yes—to be sure."

"When?"

"As soon as you please."

"All right," replied the captain. "You shall go down within an hour, and as for you, gentlemen," turning to the divers, "you need not expect that you will make much out of this trip, no matter how much may be recovered."

"But, captain, we promised the lad not to interfere with him again," said Benjamin, seeking to mollify the captain by this explanation.

"Hang your promise. It was extorted under fear of death, and does not amount to a rush-light. Bah! for your pretensions—give me men who are not afraid to come into contact with a mere boy;" and the irate captain turned on his heel, and bidding Joe to follow, ascended the deck.

As agreed, some time later, Joe donned the diving-suit he had used before and prepared for a descent, which he made as soon as all was in readiness for it.

At first he endeavored to descend into the hold of the wreck through the after-hatchway, but the *Demon* so nearly covered it that he refrained from fear of fouling or jamming the air-tubes.

He then turned his attention to the *Demon* itself, and during his examination even stepped through the sea-door into the exit-chamber.

So far he had not met with anything to make him sorry for having undertaken the descent.

He left the exit-chamber very soon after entering, for he knew not what might transpire should he remain.

He stepped on the deck of the wreck and slowly made his way toward the fore-hatch, and had arrived near it, when suddenly above the *Esmerelda's* side appeared two figures, those of Bob and Ben.

For a moment, both parties were startled, but this speedily passed and Bob, drawing his knife and advancing, sternly pointed upward with his finger, indicating that the intruder had best withdraw.

But Joe was equally as full of pluck as was Bob, and determined not to be frightened by mere show.

To show his contempt of the order, he folded his arms across his breast and stood passively watching the giver of it.

Bob advanced quickly toward him, but Joe moved not, until when within striking distance Bob's hand, holding his knife, was raised on high.

Then Joe recoiled a step or two and drew his own knife as a signal of defiance.

Bob, nothing daunted by this display, advanced again, but shrank back as he saw hovering above Joe's head a frightful-looking monster.

What it was he knew not; but in appearance it was terror-inspiring.

Ben, too, saw it at almost the same instant, and, with an inward cry of alarm, pointed at it.

Joe, aware from the movements of both that something was above him, threw back his head and glanced upward.

The monster darted down, and a fearful struggle ensued, during which both of the air-tubes were severed by the teeth of the creature; and gasping for breath, Joe sank down, when his antagonist, apparently satisfied, darted away.

Ben saw him fall—realized his danger, and drew Bob's attention to him.

Altogether, two minutes had not transpired from the opening of the fight until its finish, and Joe was yet gasping convulsively, although his brain began to dim with dark clouds which began to weigh down on it and he realized that death was near.

He groped blindly around for the signal-cord, but could not find it.

He felt the air-tubes attached to his helmet jerked and pulled just as reason was fading.

The thought "God have mercy on me," rushed through his mind, then all became a blank.

With Bob, to think was to act, and when his attention had been drawn to the diver, he hesitated not a moment, but sprang to his side.

He saw the cut air-tubes, knew that it meant death to the diver unless rescued.

"Take hold of him," he spelled out, after completely severing all connections with the surface.

Together they carried him to the *Demon*, and inside of her through the chamber.

Quickly they removed the suit, and as the visor was raised, Ben cried:

"Bob—Bob, 'tis Joe—my friend—him whom I thought was something to you."

And Bob started in surprise, for in the pale-faced, inanimate figure before him, he saw a second self.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OFF FOR HERMIT ISLAND.

ALTHOUGH startled to see that the stranger was almost a second edition of himself in appearance, Bob did not forget that he needed attending to, and after they had carried him to the room which contained the bunks, where they laid him on the floor, Bob commenced undressing him and asked Ben to help.

"No," was Ben's reply. "You undress him and I'll go and make some hot broth from that turtle meat to give him."

"You had better help me," said Bob.

"Oh, no," replied Ben. "I know best in this matter," and he repaired to the kitchen and busied himself in making the broth he had mentioned.

"Queer," thought Bob. "Queer as blazes—I can't understand him. He's as modest as a girl. Odd, hanged if it ain't; but he's more like a girl than a boy in actions, speech, voice, and manner;" and thus musing he rapidly worked away at the half-drowned Joe.

He rolled him and wrapped him in blankets afterward, and it was not until then that Ben put in an appearance with the broth, a portion of which Bob allowed to trickle down Joe's throat.

Under its warming, stimulating influence he came to himself, and in a short while was fully himself again, and, really, was not loth to stay when he found himself in company with Ben, and on board a craft in whose praises his ship-mate was so enthusiastic.

Joe, too, was much surprised to find in Bob such a strong resemblance to himself; and, indeed, the meeting set both to thinking.

Bob's mind reverted to the story which Mary Harris had told him regarding his parentage.

She had told him that he had had a brother, but that Pat had drowned him to get him, the boy, out of the way, which really had been the disposition which it had been intended to make of both.

"Can it be possible that she was mistaken, and that my brother was not drowned? Can he be my brother, or is this resemblance a mere coincidence? Shall I tell him the story, and let him go to my father, if he still be living?"

These and other questions greatly perplexed Bob, and he took an early opportunity of getting the history of Joe's life, which, as the reader already knows, we will not repeat, simply saying that when Joe spoke of the intimacy of Pat Harris and his father, it strongly inclined him to answer in the affirmative the first question.

Bob's interest in his previous life and their resemblance started a train of thought in Joe's mind that was curious in itself, for he immediately began building up a romantic story in his imagination that made them long lost brothers and sons to some millionaire.

This was a freak of fancy, yet how near the truth will be disclosed further on.

For two days after Joe's advent as an inmate of the *Demon* they worked hard, and stored away even more treasure than they previously had.

At this stage their placer failed.

Should they seek further?

This was the question discussed between the three when the last box had been placed beside the others.

Bob estimated that they had on board easily a half-million dollars, the sum spoken of by the hermit—perhaps more.

"There was more than what we have on board of her when she went down, wasn't there?" asked Joe.

"Yes."

"Well, don't give it up then. Let's continue until we get all we can."

"What say you, Ben?"

"I agree with Joe."

"Very well. Still the first thing we must do is to lay in a fresh stock of water, for we have scarcely five gallons left in the tank. We have been improvident in its use, or else there is a leak. We might as well start for Hermit Island now, don't you think so?"

The reply from both Ben and Joe was in the affirmative, and so after all three had repaired to the pilot-house, Bob drew No. 5, which raised her, and then No. 1, when she glided away from the wreck, that had been the scene of so many perils, joys and sorrows.

Joe, as had every one who had boarded the *Demon*, was perfectly delighted with her submarine movements and the scenes she presented to view, as her long, sharp prow cleft the waters in her rapid onward progress.

They had sailed along some hours, when they went to the surface to refresh the atmosphere of the *Demon*.

Then they again descended.

An hour passed away, and they were progressing smooth and fast when, without any preliminary warning, the *Demon* was tossed hither and thither by giant under-surface waves as lightly as though she was no more than a chip.

Ben and Joe were thrown violently down, and Bob would have kept them company, had he not had hold of the wheel, and thus steadied himself, to resist the rapidly-reoccurring shocks.

"What is the matter, Bob?" cried Ben, as he attempted to regain his feet, only to be thrown down again the next moment.

"God knows, I don't," replied Bob, rapidly glancing about on all sides for a solution of this phenomenon.

But all that he could see was great white foaming masses of water, chasing each other about in all directions.

Instinctively he drew No. 2, and the *Demon* stopped, and just as she did a huge mass of seething water struck her under the prow and forced it upward, until she almost stood up-

right, and then rushing along, struck the pilot house with a force that strained it and made it groan, while a crackling, noise making Bob fear for the glass, caused him to drop the protecting ron-shuter.

Several more hard shocks from fore and aft, then came a tremendous roaring, rumbling sound, deafening in intensity.

Then a stillness like death for a moment, then they felt a shock from beneath, and a sudden lifting motion.

Up, up, up they went; up, up, up.

Then daylight suddenly streamed in through the square hole in the shutter, and they knew they had reached the surface, and yet up, up they still went.

Then in an instant, and simultaneous with another deafening peal of rumbling, their upward progress was stopped.

The rumbling decreased in intensity, until finally nothing was left but the continuous low sound of far-off thunder.

Dazed and confounded, Bob threw up the shutter, the sun streamed in.

Ben and Joe too, regained their feet and looked out, and a cry of consternation escaped the lips of all, for the *Demon* rested on a rocky peak two hundred feet above the water, which was yet foaming and seething about the base of this volcanic island, which had been so instantaneously upheaved from the bottom of the sea, and to their left scarce a quarter of a mile distant from the summit of another peak, a volcano was belching forth great streams of fire and molten lava.

The formation of such islands is not an uncommon event, and any of our readers can find numerous instances quoted in their geographies.

Truly, the boys were in a strange predicament.

No way of escape could either of them discern. There was as Bob had said scarce more than five gallons of fresh water in the *Demon*. Food they had in plenty, but when the water was gone what were they to do?

The island afforded none, and the *Demon* rested on the edge of a rocky precipice two hundred feet above the sea.

What could they do but patiently await the fate in store for them?

CHAPTER XXV.

THE "STANWIX" AND THE "BLACK DEVIL."

THE captain of the *Stanwix* himself superintended the arrangements for Joe's descent, and after he had gone tended personally the signal-line.

Several times in response to his queries, Joe returned the reply "all right."

It was just following one of these replies that Joe met Ben and Bob.

The fight quickly followed in which the air-tubes were pierced by the sword-fish.

Of course the air-pumps immediately refused to work properly.

A startled exclamation from the man who was tending the pumps conveyed the information of something wrong to the captain.

"What's the matter?" he demanded, fiercely.

"The supply tubes have burst, or something like that," replied the agitated man.

In his eagerness to draw Joe up, the captain dropped the life-line, and it being near run out, the end slipped off into the sea.

He danced wildly around in agony, dictating first one order and then another.

"Haul him up by the air-tubes!" he at last cried.

Three pairs of willing hands were applied but even as they tautened, they felt the weight slacken.

The slow, sad way they drew up the tubes and their sorrowful faces told the captain as explicitly as words could have done that Joe was not there.

Still, to cover his real feelings, he assumed a brusque manner, and yelled at them:

"What's the matter with you, lazy-bones? Can't you pull up quicker? He'll be dead be-

fore he gets to the surface, if you don't hurry up."

"Sorry, cap'en, but there ain't nothin' to the end of these air divin' tubes no how," replied one of the men; "Bill can pull it in alone."

And Bill did draw in the remainder of the apparatus all alone and with the greatest of ease, and when at last the whole of it was lying on the raft, a sad and curious crowd surrounded it.

"Captain, see here."

The speaker was Benjamin, and he pointed solemnly at the end of the tube, which he had picked up a moment before, and which he had been scrutinizing.

"What's the matter now?" testily asked the captain.

"Cut!"

The word was a simple one, but what a weight of meaning it carried to those men's minds.

Of course, not knowing the actual circumstances, they supposed that Joe had met his death at the hands of the commander of the *Demon*.

The captain cursed, raved and stamped in his anger, and vowed every manner of dire vengeance on the *Demon* and her captain; and when at the end of three days none was found who dared descend to the wreck, he himself, after transferring charge of his vessel to his first officer, donned the diving armor and descended to the wreck.

On the raft the attendants momentarily expected some catastrophe, but as time passed on, and again and again came the signal "all right," they changed their minds.

Of course, the *Demon* having gone, the captain found nothing to oppose his course; but when, after hunting around for over an hour, and finding nothing to reward him for his trouble, he signaled to be taken up.

After resting awhile, and reproaching the divers on their want of courage, he descended again, but was compelled to return again unsuccessful.

In his next descent Dimond consented to accompany him, and, although they found nothing, confidence was restored, and after that the three worked together beneath the surface in perfect unison.

They found that the place by the cabin bulkhead had been worked to its limits; but, although somewhat discouraged by this, as they wished to regain their former position in the captain's esteem, and he wished it, they continued their exploration.

After toiling painfully and slowly in digging away a large mass of sand about fifteen feet from the bulkhead, they struck upon another portion of the buried treasure.

The good news was signaled up, and although the divers knew it not, three rousing cheers and a tiger broke from the throats of the seamen at their success.

Their perseverance—as perseverance always is, no matter what the object be—was rewarded, and when they appeared on the surface each with a box, they were again cheered heartily.

From this time work went rapidly onward, descents to and ascents from the wreck following each other rapidly.

After a peculiarly successful day's work, evening settled down. While lying still as they were, they kept but a lookout on deck besides the officer in charge. The evening wore along. Seven bells—half-past eleven struck, and almost at the same moment the lookout cried out in ringing tones:

"Ship ahoy!"

"Aye, aye," came the stentorian reply.

"Where away?"

"*Vandalia*."

"Lay to."

"No time." And as the last words were uttered, the stranger passed across the bows of the *Stanwix*, and was swallowed up in the darkness, the light in her rigging twinkling and glittering—disappearing and reappearing like some star.

Then all at once a bright red light sprang up from a tin plate on one of the catheads of the *Stanwix*.

Quickly the lookout rushes to the spot, but even as he arrived there, it died out and the dish fell into the sea.

The circumstance was immediately reported to the officer in charge of the deck, who, having been sleeping while on duty, commanded the man to say nothing of the circumstance; and, as he was the only one who saw it, the strange affair failed to reach the captain's ears.

The next night and the next following a strange vessel hove in sight and dashed by in the same manner, excepting that no bright light burned on board the *Stanwix*.

These last two happenings were reported to the captain, and he determined in his mind to watch Pat Harris closely, the detective suggesting that it might be the vessel from which the villain had jumped, and which he possibly was in collusion with.

A few more nights passed, and on each one, about midnight, they saw or heard the creaking of a vessel's spars not far off as she went past.

They had removed from the *Esmerelda's* hold all the wealth that by patient, untiring, unflagging zeal they could find.

So far the weather had been exceeding fine, but on the day of the bringing up of the last box, deep, heavy clouds hung low, appeared upon the horizon, and began creeping toward them at a snail's pace.

By dusk everything looked so fierce and dark that the captain determined to slip his cables, and leaving the raft anchored where she was, beat around the neighborhood until the storm had passed.

The hours wore on, and as midnight approached a figure crept up on deck from the fore-castle, and approached the bow.

Not many minutes had passed when the creaking of spars and blocks told those on deck that a vessel was passing not far distant.

Then up rose this figure that had been crouching in the shade of a heap of cable, and the next instant the glare of a burning blue-light flashed out, and in its ghastly flame was revealed the features of—Pat Harris.

Scarce an instant later came an answering light, then sounds of orders given in a loud and rapid voice, interspersed with curses at the slowness with which they were executed.

The captain of the *Stanwix* had been standing on the quarter-deck, and as he saw the blue light flash out from near the fore-chains, he darted forward, and with an oath yelled:

"Die, dog of a traitor!"

As he ran, he had drawn his pistol, and as the report rang out Pat Harris dropped prone to the vessel's deck.

The truth was apparent then to the captain. He ran to the fore-castle companionway.

"Up, up," he shouted. "We are attacked by pirates."

In dim confusion the sailors rushed on deck, seized marlinspikes, anything—everything that could form a weapon of defense.

Several minutes later came a shock—the *Black Devil* lay alongside of the *Stanwix*.

The first man to mount the sail was Darrell, the pirate captain.

"Follow me—down with them!" he shouted, and then a horde of yelling fiends swarmed upon the decks of the *Stanwix*.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE RESULT OF THE ATTACK.

As the reader has surmised, the jumping into the sea, and subsequent appearance of Pat Harris on board the *Stanwix*, was but a deep-laid plot of Captain Darrell to gain possession of the wealth which Yawpey had informed him they were seeking for.

Night after night did the *Black Devil* prowl around in the vicinity of the *Stanwix*, and the red light, which had been burned, was lighted by Pat Harris, and conveyed the information to the pirate captain that the lost wealth was being

recovered; and in its turn the blue light informed him that the time for an attack had come.

What need of describing the fight?

It is the same old story which has been described times innumerable.

Suffice it, that before the *Stanwix's* crew could hardly realize it, one-half their number were stricken down in death, and the remainder were penned up in one corner, while the gleaming knives and pistols in the hands of those detailed to guard them prevented their striking another blow.

Under the leadership of Captain Darrell, a search was instituted for the place of deposit of the wealth that had excited their cupidity.

You will remember that when the captain of the *Stanwix* fired, Pat Harris fell to the deck; but that was only a ruse, as the ball whistled harmlessly above his head.

The captain then turned his attention to repelling the boarders; but, at length, he was struck by a bullet and wounded so severely that he could not fight further, although his ringing voice urged his men on to battle.

The wealth was found, and quickly transferred to the *Black Devil*. Her crew boarded her, the lines were cast off, and they drifted apart. But a short distance intervened when the pirate opened a fire into the *Stanwix*, determined to finish his devilishness in a manner worthy of the bloody beginning.

A fortunate shot struck the mainmast and it went by the board, and shortly after the mizzen followed. The captain ordered the wrecks cleared away, and as the rigging was cut away and they went smashing into the sea, the *Stanwix*, which under their weight had been heeled over, righted up. A few minutes later they discovered that while heeled over a ball had passed through her side below the water line.

Into this break formed by the pirate's bullet the water was rushing, but not so fast but that she could be kept clear by the pumps.

The *Black Devil* still kept up her cannonading, but owing to a rising, choppy sea, which forebode the storm that we have stated had been brewing all day, their aim became less effective, and further, the lights had been taken from her rigging, which made one less guide for the pirate to shoot by.

The storm now came on apace, and Captain Darrell was at last obliged to run before the storm, and in a short while all trace of the *Black Devil* was gone, except in the mutilated condition of the *Stanwix* and the mangled bodies that lay upon her deck.

Happily for those on the *Stanwix*, the foremast was still standing, and the forestay-sail was loosed, a few reefs taken, and then it was bolted home.

This gave her steerageway, and she, too, ran before the storm which had now increased to a very tempest.

The wind, to use an old, well-worn nautical phrase, "blew great guns."

They took it on the beam, and away she went ploughing through the mountain-high waves which now and then, in curling its crested top on high, broke over the quarter and went rushing up the waist to discharge itself in small cataracts through the scuppers.

All day long this wild race went on.

But, as the darkness of night began settling down, the fury of the tempest somewhat abated, and gradually grew less violent all night long.

By morning the tempest proper was over, although still yet the elements fiercely warred.

The leak had grown from the straining of her timbers, and they had all they could do to keep her free from water, and, in fact, it at length became so bad that they could not do even this.

Night closed in again, and through all the long hours that elapsed before daybreak the tired sailors were compelled to keep the pumps going to save her from foundering.

Towards morning the wind veered around to another quarter, and they changed the course of the *Stanwix*. Day broke—showing a wretched state of circumstances, for the

men were tired and worn-out and could not work longer, while the vessel was nearly water-logged.

The tempest had entirely passed, and but a nice sailing breeze was blowing.

The unfortunates who had met their death at the hands of lawless men and pirate bullets were now accorded a burial, which had been impossible before.

Truly it was a sad, a solemn sight, this consigning to the waves the brave-hearted, gallant tars who had perished at the hand of human tigers—human fiends.

This sad duty performed the remainder of the crew was divided into watches of equal number.

An attempt was made to free the vessel from water, but it failed. They could prevent a further raise in its depth but could not gain on it, and it was welcome intelligence when "land ahead" was reported.

Toward it the bows of the *Stanwix* were headed, and, some hours later, the battered, shattered hull of the once beautifully formed and proportioned vessel was grounded on a rough, pebbly beach in a cove formed by two promontories which jutted out into the sea.

Landlocked as the cove nearly was, the surf was not very heavy, and after a passage to the shore had been gained, and a rope stretched from the *Stanwix* to the beach and fastened to a tree, the remaining persons on board found no particular difficulty in getting ashore.

It providentially happened that they had grounded at high tide, which when it had ebbed left the *Stanwix* almost entirely out of water.

Owing to this circumstance they were enabled to bring ashore various articles which conduced greatly to their comfort, such as sails, from which they constructed tents, bedding, cooking utensils, etc.

It took several days to arrange things properly; they having constructed two large tents, in one of which were installed Jim Devon, who had come through the fight unscathed; the captain, whose wound, thanks to the detective's knowledge of surgery, was progressing finely; the divers, House and Dimond, Benjamin having been killed, and the other officers of the ill-starred *Stanwix*, while the other sheltered all that remained of her crew.

"Well, captain, what do you intend to do now?" asked Devon, after all these arrangements had been concluded.

"The only thing we can do," was the reply, "is to remain quietly here and wait the chance passing of some vessel. Our small boats having all been splintered in the fight leaves us flat on our backs, to speak in a metaphorical sense. I shall climb to the top of the peak in the center of the island, for such I am convinced we are on, this afternoon, and erect a spar and flag there. That's all that can be done."

"I'll go along with you," said Devon.

And that afternoon, Devon and the captain climbed the peak, followed by the sailors, who carried a short extra spar obtained from the hold of the *Stanwix*.

They reached the summit, from which they could see that the captain had surmised correctly concerning their being on an island.

By simply turning on his heel Devon saw all its boundaries.

As he stood gazing at the view before him, he saw something that caused him to start in surprise.

But a few miles out at sea he saw a vessel speeding along under a cloud of canvas, and, moreover, her prow was headed in the direction of the island.

"See, captain," he cried, clasping the captain's shoulder with his left hand, and pointing out the vessel with the index finger of his right. "See, a vessel!"

At first a joyful look lighted up the captain's face as his eyes rested on the vessel, then it clouded and a look of anxiety usurped its place.

"What's the matter?" asked the detective, who had noted the change of expression.

"Look at her again," was the only reply vouchsafed.

Devon scanned the vessel, then said:

"I see nothing wrong. What do you mean?"

"Can't you see? Can't you guess?"

"No."

"Look at the masthead."

A glance, and he ejaculated:

"My God, 'tis the pirate."

And true it was, for from her peak floated the flag of the freebooters.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A SHORT RETROSPECT.

To better understand the relation of some of our characters to each other, and some of the incidents which will be spoken of further on, we must beg the kind reader's permission to carry him back some years previous to the opening of our story.

John Berry was the president of one of New York's, at that day, most wealthy and stable banks, and besides being an officer in it was a heavy stockholder.

He had always been noted for his keenness and shrewdness on financial questions.

Starting out in life a poor boy, he had worked his way up in the world until, finally, he found himself one of New York's wealthiest men, and furthermore, it had all been gained in legitimate business.

He married a young girl who had hitherto been dependent upon her brother, a wealthy bachelor, for support.

Shortly after his marriage he commenced dabbling in stocks, and, led away by the spirit of speculation which took hold on him, he dove recklessly into all sorts of enterprises, notably one which had been started even at that day to recover the lost treasure of which our friend, Bob Harris, had become a partial possessor.

The bubble bursted, and left him a goodly sum out of pocket.

One reverse followed another, and although it was unknown to the outside world at the time, he found himself a bankrupt man.

Ever since the idea of regaining the wealth lost in the *Esmerelda* had been started he had been its warmest advocate, and when, as loss after loss followed quickly in each other's footsteps, he began brooding in secret of the lost treasure, a tithe of which would have restored him to his strong financial position of bygone days, it became with him a monomania.

One day it was rumored about Wall Street that he had lost heavily and had not met his engagements.

The next came the report that John Berry had absconded with most of the funds of the bank.

And so he had, but where to, the world never knew.

He had been seen the night before, but when morning came he could not be found—he had completely vanished.

All his wife could tell of him was revealed by this note, which had been left at the door by a boy, after dark:

"DEAR WIFE—When you are reading this I shall be speeding away from New York—where—God will determine. I am bankrupt, and dare not face honest men. The house we live in, is in your name. Keep it and the ready money you have, and strive to bring our little girl up in ignorance of the disgrace her father inflicts upon her. God forgive me for this step, and you, too, and our little Retta. Good-bye, forever perhaps.

"Your husband,

"JOHN BERRY."

She read the letter—he had gone—that was all.

Mrs. Berry, however, prompted by her high-principled nature, gave up everything to her husband's creditors, and then taking her little babe, she started by rail to her brother's house.

A collision occurred—she was severely wounded, and rendered senseless.

When she recovered her senses it was to find that her child was gone, whither, she knew not, nor could she learn.

She was taken to her bachelor brother's house, and there remained quietly, attending to his wants.

An extended search was made for the child, but it availed nothing.

So the years rolled on, and, beyond the few visitors that came to Beach Lawn, the monotony of her life was not broken.

James Raymond, her brother, was a lawyer of high standing, and it so happened that the relatives of Dr. Banks got into a muss as to the division of the property, and one faction employed him to represent them in court.

Some allusion was made to the child which Dr. Banks had found, and her name of Retta was mentioned.

Quietly Raymond pursued his inquiries and learned enough to convince him that Retta was his niece, the long lost child of his sister; and learning further of the doctor's intended disposition of his property, he contested their claim in court so successfully, on grounds such as only an ingenious lawyer can raise, that Retta was declared the heir-at-law.

Of course Mrs. Berry was made acquainted with these facts, and immediately detectives were set at work to ferret out the whereabouts of the proud young girl, who, sooner than be taunted, had started out to brave the world alone.

She removed her residence to New York to be better able to further the work of hunting up her daughter, for Retta had been seen pursuing that direction, and Mrs. Berry felt sure that ultimately she had reached the city.

Mrs. Berry mingled but little in society; but one night while at the house of a friend of her brother's, a lawyer by profession and the legal adviser of William Drew, the banker, that gentleman happened in to consult with his counsel on some point of law.

An introduction followed, superadded, on Mrs. Berry's part, by the words:

"I believe Mr. Drew and myself have met before."

He stiffly nodded assent, and maintained a reserve toward her.

This melted away, however, when the lawyer began telling the story of Retta's loss and final disappearance.

On this point Mr. Drew could sympathize with Mrs. Berry, and he signified as much by his words, and in his turn made them confidants as regarded the steps he had taken to discover the whereabouts of his two sons, whom he was confident were still living.

It may be well to mention here that Berry and Drew had been rivals in business and various other matters, which at first had caused him to be reserved when introduced to Mrs. Berry.

Days lengthened into weeks, and weeks into months, and still no tidings had ever reached the mother concerning her daughter.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BEN FALLS INTO THE VOLCANO.

It was some minutes before the three inmates of the *Demon* could realize the truth of what they saw.

Bob looked about him, rubbed his eyes and looked again.

No, it was not a dream but a startling actuality.

Below him, two hundred feet or more, lay the angry troubled sea, whose pulsing waves broke foamy and crested on the rocky shore, and then retreated as if surprised by the contact with a resisting power, where before they had rushed wild and free.

He turned to the right, to again see the volcano, which was belching forth great masses of red-hot matter, smoke, and ashes.

The matter finally grew so thick as to ob-

secure everything from sight, resembling snow in appearance as it fell.

An hour passed by, and as if in a dream the boys sat still in the pilot-house, and stared blankly at each other, or endeavored to see through the pall of ashes.

At length the ashes grew less in quantity, the sun began to struggle through.

Finally, the atmosphere was clear of them altogether, and but for a rumbling sound they might have fancied that the volcano was quiet, since it had ceased vomiting its fire and ashes.

Then came one prolonged rumble, and, as the boys looked, from the crater was ejected a mass of water and steam which ascended high toward heaven.

This eruption of water and steam lasted about an hour, and then ceased, after which the rumbling grew less intense in character, with longer intervals, and finally ceased almost entirely.

Bob had heard of islands being formed almost instantly, but had ever considered it as a fiction; but he now was convinced that he had been mistaken.

The proof of this, their having been lifted bodily from beneath the sea over two hundred feet above it, was not to be doubted.

The island thus formed was not over half a mile broad in any direction, and was in shape nearly a perfect circle.

The peaks rose up high above the surrounding portions of this volcanic island, one, that on which the *Demon* rested, and which descended precipitously to the water, the other that from which the volcano had issued.

The boys remained inside, and did not venture out until, with fresh water exhausted, they began to be assailed by the pangs of thirst.

Then they sallied forth, yet with no definite views, for they could not expect to find fresh water on the island.

The inner face of the peak they found to slope quite gently toward the valley that divided the two cones or hills.

They had descended half way to the valley when a pool of sea water that had been caught and retained in a cup-shaped recess in the rock caught Joe's eye.

"Can't we use that somewhat?" thought Joe. He tasted of it. It was salt and bitter.

Somewhere he had heard of filtering water through earthen jars, and turning to Bob he asked:

"Have you an earthen pot or jar on board the *Demon*?"

"No. Why do you ask?"

"Simply because if you had, we could filter this sea water through it."

"Would that make it fit to drink?"

"Yes."

"And would it filter through fast enough to supply our needs?"

"That is a question I cannot pretend to answer. At any rate, just at this time, a few drops would be better than none."

"Very true; but would passing it through an earthen pot make it fresh enough to use?"

"I answered that question once before," replied Joe; but the asperity of the answer was lost on Bob, who stood with head bent as if in thought, and engrossed with some idea.

"I have it."

It was Bob who spoke, and so suddenly and decisively, that Ben and Joe, who had mutely stood watching him, started involuntarily.

Joe, the next moment, asked:

"Have what?"

"An idea."

"Well, let's have the benefit of it."

"It's simply this: If earthenware will extract the salt from sea water as it passes through its pores, why will not vessels made from this porous sandstone do the same?" and, as Bob finished, he pointed at several detached pieces of the mentioned variety of stone almost at his feet.

"By George, Bob, but you're a brick," enthusiastically said Joe. "You've got a long

head on your shoulders, hanged if you haven't; but," he added after a momentary pause, "how are you going to make those filtering vessels you spoke of?"

"I've got iron-working tools on board the *Demon*, and I'll press the chisels into service for cutting stone."

"Bob, I say it again, you're smart, and no mistake. But we'll have to hurry up, because I'm fearful dry even now, and it'll be some time before we get water."

"All right. Take hold of this piece and I'll take the other, and we'll go back and commence work right away."

Each carried a piece of the sandstone back to the *Demon*, and passing through, they took them up on deck.

Then Bob procured the chisels spoken of and several small hammers, after which he and Joe commenced the laborious work of making bowl-shaped receptacles of the blocks of stone.

After some hours of hard work Bob had one nearly finished, when an unlucky stroke demolished the result of his labor.

In his vexation he was nearly ready to swear, and so disheartened was he when a similar accident happened to Joe that he gave up work altogether.

Ben had been busy in various ways during this time inside the *Demon*, but came on deck in time to see the disastrous result of their work.

After a moment's hesitation, as if scarcely daring to hazard an idea which had entered his mind, he hesitatingly said:

"I say, Bob, don't you think—that is—can't you"—

"Can't I what?" asked Bob, taking advantage of the momentary pause which Ben made.

"What I meant to say, is—can't you rig up some attachment to the engine to drill them out!"

For the space of a minute Bob was silent, and then springing to his feet he cried:

"Ben, you've struck the nail on the head, I believe. I can arrange something of the kind."

He went inside, and after examining the mechanism connected with the pump, a joyous cry escaped him.

He unscrewed the connections, heated a piece of iron against the copper rods, forged it into a collar which clasped the end of a shaft which revolved and held the end of a chisel.

He started the engine and the chisel turned rapidly.

"Eureka! Glorious!" he cried. "Bring me a piece of stone?"

The soft stone was brought down, and holding it in his hands he pressed it against the chisel.

A gritting, grinding noise immediately succeeded the whirr of the machinery, and the chips began to fall to the floor.

The problem was solved, or was when from several pieces of board Bob constructed a rack to hold the rock while being bored out.

An hour and a half later he had finished a receptacle capable of holding several gallons, the sides of which were about half an inch thick.

This was quickly filled with sea water, and in ten or fifteen minutes, the anxious watchers saw great beads of clear water begin to form on the outside of the crude vessel.

Bob ran his forefinger along the stone, and placed it, dripping wet, in his mouth.

The result was satisfactory, for the exudation, although somewhat brackish, at least had been thoroughly deprived of its saltiness.

With a piece of wire the receptacle was suspended above a tin pan and then they turned their attention to boring out more of them.

The filtration of the water through the stone was very slow, no more than a pint in twenty-four hours.

And yet to the boys who had begun to suffer deeply from thirst even that much was very precious.

After much arduous work they had six of them suspended from the ceiling, slowly dripping the precious fluid into other receptacles placed beneath them.

Then, their food by this time being exhaust-

ed, they turned their attention to procuring more.

In this search they were fortunate; for in several large, hollow cup-shaped recesses, in the rock filled with sea water, they found fishes of various kinds, which like themselves, had been carried up from beneath the sea in the ascent of the island.

Truly a kind Providence seemed to watch over them and provide relief from the countless perils they had undergone.

The next thing that demanded their consideration was the means of leaving the island; but although they all bent their minds to the task, none could devise a means of accomplishing this object.

So, as the only thing left them to do, Bob took a piece of canvas, the remainder of the piece which the hermit had used to make the covers to the openings in the rock at Hermit Island, and fastened it to an extra conducting-rod made to replace any of those that should be broken in the *Demon*, and planted this signal of distress on the edge of the bluff.

With this provided, the boys began to look about them, and, curious to see the inside of the volcano, which had remained inactive for some time, Bob proposed that they should make a trip to it.

To this the others assented, and the next morning, by sunrise, they started.

It was quite a journey, down the side of the peak on which the *Demon* rested, and up the other to the summit, but at last they arrived at the top, which they found to be nearly in the shape of a triangle, and as smooth as a table between its edges and the rim of the crater.

Approaching this, side by side, the boys bent over and glanced downward, and simultaneously saw, away down in the bowels of the earth, a fiery mass of molten matter, which rushed in mimic waves against the sides.

It was a sea of fire in verity; boiling, bubbling, with ripples and waves darting over the surface, struggling and contending as when sea-waves meet the surf of a rock-bound shore.

The crater or cavity was largest at its mouth, gradually narrowing as it descended, its sides rough and irregular, while from crevices beside jutting rocks here and there, jets of smoke and steam issued.

A sulphurous smell pervaded the air.

Truly, it was a grand sight, something worth a lifetime of exertion to see.

The boys were deeply impressed by the scene, and after looking at it for some minutes they skirted the mouth to get a view from another point.

Once Bob paused and glanced over, but instantly staggered back, struggling and gasping.

This was caused by the sulphurous fumes that had exit from a crevice but a few feet below.

The effects, however, soon passed off.

Later, they stopped and looked down again. The character of the molten fiery mass had changed, and at spots was shooting up in fountain-like jets far above the surface.

"We must leave here soon," said Bob, "for I believe another eruption is close at hand. See the lava rush up the sides. Isn't it grand, sir? There o e fiery wave has ran far up the side. There goes another; it reached almost to the top. Come, we must go; it is dangerous to stay longer."

As Bob was speaking Ben had walked onward; and as he ceased speaking, Ben bent over and peered again into the depths.

A sulphurous jet, a very strong one, was immediately beneath him, and as he inhaled the fumes he coughed and choked convulsively.

He felt his brain reel, he felt himself going. Wildly, convulsively, he grasped the air, then came a terror-stricken scream, and he fell headlong toward the fiery lake below.

CHAPTER XXIX.

BEN IS RESCUED FROM HIS DANGER.

As we have stated, Ben was overcome by the sulphurous fumes which he inhaled, and went downward toward the lake of fire which bubbled and hissed in the bowels of the earth, headlong.

As he fell, one single cry of agony escaped his lips, and then all was still.

Joe and Bob saw him go, and both staggered and nearly fell to the earth under the crushing weight of the calamity.

They turned and stared blankly at each other for some moments; and then, in a hoarse, unnatural voice in which his anguish could be plainly read, Bob gasped out these words:

"Look down, Joe, for God's sake, and see what has become of him."

"I can't," groaned Joe, shuddering with horror as he spoke, his mind having conjured up a terrible picture, which he durst not have confirmed by what he felt sure would meet his gaze.

"Please look," cried Bob.

"I can't—I can't," moaned Joe.

With tottering steps Bob approached the crater's edge, reaching which, he attempted to look into its depth; but with a shiver of horror he involuntarily closed his eyes.

But nerving himself to withstand a horrible sight, such as he felt positive would meet his gaze, he opened his eyes and looked downwards.

At first he saw nothing but the boiling mass of fire.

He scanned its surface, expecting to see the body of Ben there.

But no; it was not.

Could the body have been consumed by the fire so soon?

Bob asked himself the question, and inwardly answered "no."

Then a wild hope took possession of him—a hope that by some means Ben's downward progress had been stopped ere reaching the lake of fire.

And so—hoping yet fearing—he scanned the bowl-shaped side of the volcano with a great intensity of gaze.

And—yes—no—yes—yes—his hope was not a vain one, for on a ledge of rock which jutted out of the side, about fifty feet from the top, lay poor Ben, senseless, and with the blood streaming from a cut in his head, which hung over the side of the jutting rock on which he was lying.

A glad cry—a heartfelt, "God be praised," escaped Bob's lips.

"What is it? What is it?" eagerly asked Joe, advancing to Bob's side.

"See, see," was the reply of Bob, as he pointed out the inanimate figure.

"But is he alive yet?" queried Joe. "Hasn't his fall killed him?"

"No—no—I am sure it has not. But how are we to get him up from there?"

"I don't know; but one thing, Bob, is this: Whatever is done, must be done quickly, for an eruption will take place in a very short while, I am sure," said Joe.

"True, only too true; but I'll rescue him or perish in the attempt; but it'll be the former. God helping me," was Bob's solemn rejoinder.

He wasted no more time in useless talking, but, finding a spot which gave him foothold, he began climbing down the precipitous side of the lava-scored crater.

It was no child's play, for now and then he came to places that required the utmost circumspection in crossing, and the sure-footedness of an Alpine goat.

He could not pursue a straight course toward Ben, but was compelled to follow a zigzag way, that finally carried him beneath the very ledge on which his unconscious companion was lying.

After a tough struggle he mounted to the ledge, and picking Ben up he laid him down again, in such a way that his head was elevated, and no longer hung down.

Ben's face was deathly pale, and Bob could not fully persuade himself that he was really alive until he placed a hand on his breast and felt the yet faintly-beating heart.

The next moment a look of incredulous surprise appeared on Bob's face; then he gazed intently at the small, clear-cut features before him, after which he murmured.

"I've suspected as much before. What is the mystery here? But first to get him—her out of danger."

"Bob—Bob!"

The voice was Joe's and the tone betokened some alarm.

"Well?"

"If you don't hurry you'll be too late."

"Aye, aye," returned Bob, thus intimating his knowledge of the necessity of being expeditious.

He looked above him.

The way was too steep for him to carry Ben up, and yet he could not wait until he became conscious.

What should he do?

This puzzled Bob exceedingly; and yet it required solving speedily, for each moment was the molten matter below him growing more angry, and darting in fountain-like jets higher and higher, and ultimately one of these towering jets rose to a level with the ledge and close beside, and as it fell some sparks of the fiery spray fell at Bob's feet.

Bob was much vexed for a solution of the problem of saving Ben's life; but this was arrived at by the lad regaining his consciousness.

When first he opened his eyes Ben gazed about in a dazed way, as if not fully comprehending the state of affairs.

Then, as he remembered the terrible fall, he shivered from head to foot, and groped about with his hands, as if to satisfy himself that he had not fallen into the lake of fire.

Then, as his eyes fell on Bob, who had stood curiously watching the rapid changes of expression on his countenance, a reassured look took the place of the previous one. He rose up to a sitting posture, and with Bob's help rose to his feet.

"Oh, it was terrible—fearful. I remember I choked, screamed, and then fell, and all became dark. My head felt—what's this—blood?"

He had raised his hand to his head as he mentioned it, and encountered the still fresh blood.

"Yes; you struck your head in falling. But we can't stay here any longer. Are you strong enough, think you, with my help, to climb up to the top?"

"I—think—so," replied Ben, but in a tone which exhibited some doubt.

"Well, let's try," said Bob. "Now take hold of my arm, step here, first—that's it—now there—that's it—you're doing well."

And encouraging Ben by cheerful words as they slowly advanced, Bob began to hope for the successful ending of their upward progress.

They had arrived within eight or ten feet of the top, when the ground began to tremble, and from its bowels came a tremendous rolling roar.

The crater's side, from the spot they stood on to the top, was perfectly perpendicular, and for a moment Bob was nonplussed concerning his next move which necessarily must be quickly accomplished, for he knew that the rumbling meant a speedy eruption.

Then he said in a quiet reassuring voice:

"Ben, just get up on my shoulders, and Joe will then be able to reach you and pull you up."

"I can't," moaned Ben, who, having passed through so much, was completely unnerved by the apparent imminent peril.

"You must," said Bob, authoritatively.

"I can't," again moaned Ben.

"Joe, just drop me one end of your coat," said Bob next.

Joe complied with the request, although the end dangled some two or three feet above Bob's head.

Bob now clasped Ben in his arms, and raising him up, commanded him to take hold of the coat, which order was complied with.

Joe then commenced drawing up on the coat, and soon, as Bob also assisted from below, Ben's hands were near enough the top for Joe to seize. A good strong pull, a slight struggle on Ben's part, and he was in safety.

As for Bob, he skirted along the side for a short distance, and, with Joe's help, was also soon in safety, and yet not a minute too soon, as was testified to by a quaking and jarring, and rumbling beneath them.

Supporting Ben between them, they hurried down the side of the peak, and had but barely crossed the valley and commenced ascending the hill on which the *Demon* was lying, when there came a report as of innumerable batteries of artillery, and as they turned and gazed at the crater, they saw mounting high toward heaven a gigantic volume of red-hot matter.

They had not gotten away a moment too soon, for, as the burning fluid dropped, it fell on the inside of the hill and rushed in fiery torrents to the valley below, which the boys had crossed but such a short time previously.

After an hour's toilsome work they arrived at the top of the peak, and the three thankful boys entered the *Demon*, completely fagged out.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE HOME OF THE PIRATES.

WHEN at last the storm grew so fierce that they could no longer fire with any accuracy, the pirate captain gave orders to ease the vessel of her canvas, and allow her to run before the now very hurricane.

As a vessel, the *Black Devil* was a beauty.

Built with an eye to speed, her prow was long and narrow, and cut through the water like a knife. The water-line was low. Spars raked slightly and were full-rigged.

Captain Darrell and Pat Harris stood side by side on the quarter-deck, gazing at the dismantled *Stanwix*, which they were fast dropping astern.

"Do you think she'll float long, captain?" asked Pat.

"No. I'm quite sure she will not, for when she was heeled over, I saw through my glass that one of our shots had made an ugly hole below her water-line."

"It don't make much difference anyhow, for she can never outlive this storm," said Pat.

"I'm quite sure of that, and I'm glad of it, for every time that a vessel escapes with any of her crew living, it creates a devil of a hullabaloo, and they generally send out a cruiser to look for me. Not that I care so much for that though, for I consider myself just a little bit too sharp for the fellows they send out. But you see when a vessel, her crew, and everything disappears, why they are apt to lay it to foundering at sea or something of the kind. Understand?"

"Yes, of course," replied Pat. "But, captain, what do you think of the way I managed things?"

"I think you did first-rate. We've made a good spec out of the *Stanwix*. It was a capital thing, that capturing of Yawpey, who gave us information of the object of the vessel."

"So it was. What is to be your next move?" inquired Pat.

"Why, as soon as the storm passes, I shall head for the cove."

"What cove is that?"

"Pirate Cove—or home, if you choose to call it such. I've never told you of it before, but we have a retreat on an out-of-the-way island, where in case we are hard-pressed we can retire and remain until the exigency of the occasion has passed."

"Oh! I understand. Phew! How it does blow. Can we stand it, captain?"

"Yes, or twice as much," and Captain Dar-

rell here closed the conversation by turning on his heel and descending to the cabin.

The *Stanwix* by this time was lost to sight, and nobody on board the pirate vessel thought more of her, their time being fully occupied in attending to the various duties which a storm always entails.

As soon as practicable the *Black Devil's* course was changed and she was headed in the direction of Pirate's Cove, but as she had gone so much faster and further than the *Stanwix*, the latter, although by accident, arrived at the island first, and on the side opposite the cove; so that the vessel which the captain of the *Stanwix* and Jim Devon saw from the hill in the center of the island was, as they correctly surmised, really the one with which they had had the fight.

The top of the hill on which they stood was perfectly bare, and at Devon's suggestion, as they did not wish by any chance to be seen by the pirates, they descended it far enough to be out of sight, while the men who had followed with the canvas and spar were ordered to come no further.

After a few minutes of hasty consultation with Devon, the captain crawled up until he could see and watch the incoming vessel.

As she came nearer the shore he could see that she was aiming for a cove which, after running in from the sea perhaps slightly more than a quarter of a mile, turned sharply to the right and ran inland, parallel with the shore for a mile or more, the tongue of land forming this L-shaped cove being covered with timber.

Truly, as Captain Darrell had said, they could, when hard pressed run in there and lie until all danger had passed, for, with topmasts shipped, when behind this tongue, nought could betray the presence of the *Black Devil* to a vessel passing outside.

As the captain and Devon watched the onward progress of the pirate, they saw her enter the cove and run up it.

Arrived at the bend, they wore about and, favored by a light breeze, sailed up toward the head of the cove.

Having had their eyes so firmly fixed on the vessel neither of the watchers observed the crowd which had formed on the narrow beach at the head of the cove, or the number of rude huts just back of them.

These they did not discover until the *Black Devil* had penetrated nearly the entire distance.

"There is our home," said Captain Darrell, advancing and placing one hand on Pat Harris's shoulder, while with the index finger of the other he pointed at the collection of huts. "What do you think of it as a hiding-place?"

"It's perfect," replied Pat. "This cove is just the thing; you can never be discovered here."

"I know that. You must go ashore with me and put up at my mansion, which, by the way, is the largest one of the huts; there it is in about the center of the group, and I'll introduce you to my wife."

"Then you are married," said Pat.

"Yes; I say, Darby, we're close enough, I guess. Let go the anchor and send some of the boys up to ship the topmasts."

"Kerect," was the slang answer of Darrell's first officer, to whom he had addressed the latter part of his speech.

Darrell and Pat were set ashore immediately, the former being welcomed by wild demonstrations of joy by a motley, villainous-looking set of men and women.

"I thought as how ye must ha' met wi' bad luck."

"We 'gin ter fear ye wasna cumin' back."

"How you vas, captain, eh? Goot luck, yah?"

"Pardoenz moi, captane, but ze happe look tell zat you haf good news."

These were but a few of the expressions delivered in various accents, showing the nationality of the speakers.

These men were nearly all cripples, who having been wounded so badly as to be of little use in case of a fight, were left ashore to guard

the accumulated treasure of the rascally crew, which was kept in an underground vault built for the purpose, and to take care of the women, of whom there was over a score.

Captain Darrell's wife, Pat found to be a rather fine-looking woman, whom, as he afterwards learned had been captured and taken from a merchantman that the pirates had attacked and destroyed.

Her greeting, which was cold in character, evinced her state of feelings toward her husband.

It was evident that her residence on the island was compulsory.

Later in the day, the treasure which had been stolen from the *Stanwix* was brought ashore and deposited in the vault, after which a barrel of whisky was brought from a storehouse situated near the vault, and being tapped was dispensed with an unsparing hand, and the watchers from the hill saw a wild drunken revel instituted which lasted the rest of the day, and far into the night.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE VOLCANIC ISLAND'S ANTICS.

THE first thing which Bob did after reaching the inside of the *Demon* was to wash thoroughly the cut on Ben's head, and apply a piece of court-plaster to the wound, after which, at his suggestion, Ben went to bed.

Bob had heard the history of the meeting between Ben and Joe, and yet he went to the latter and requested him to narrate the circumstances again.

His object in this was to find out if possible whether Joe was in possession of the secret which he had stumbled into that morning.

Joe's narration and subsequent answers to his questions convinced Bob that the other knew nothing concerning Ben's real identity.

Later, Bob visited Ben's bedside and found him in quite a high fever and wide awake.

"Water," said Ben faintly, his eyes gladdening as he caught sight of Bob.

Bob returned to the room where the filtering receptacles were, and collected all there was, about a quart, with which he returned to Ben's bedside.

Raising him up Bob applied the vessel to his lips, and Ben took a long, deep draught, and murmuring: "Thank you," sank back on his pillow.

"How do you feel?" asked Bob, in a gentle tone of voice.

"Not very good," said Ben, with a faint attempt at a smile. "Quite weak, I believe."

"You bore up a great deal better than I should have expected, considering that you are—are—unaccustomed to—to—roughing it."

Whether it was the manner in which Bob spoke, or his words or his hesitation, or all combined, or a vague suspicion founded on something else that his well-guarded secret had been discovered, only Ben can tell, but turning his eyes full on Bob, he raised to his elbow, and remained thus for some moments still intently gazing at his companion.

Then, in a low, tremulous voice, he hesitatingly said:

"Have you found out—that is do you know—know—that I am not"—

He paused, and waited for an answer, and Bob on the principle of straight-forwardness in all matters, mutely nodded assent; seeing which, Ben sank back on his pillow again, dumbly moaning, and covering his face with his hands.

Seeing that Ben was much distressed, Bob considerably left him to himself for over an hour, at the expiration of which time he returned again.

Ben looked up as the entered, and blushed a deep scarlet.

"Will you sit down here, please?" said Ben, pointing beside the head of the bed.

Bob assumed the desired position, and then, after a pause of much embarrassment to both, Ben said:

"I don't know what you can think of me

for masquerading in this style, still I believe you a true friend, and will tell you the circumstances connected with it;" and then Ben returned to the time when he had lived an inmate of good old Dr. Banks's house, under the name Retta Banks. She told of the doctor's death, the cruelty of his relatives, her flight, the abuse inflicted on one of her sex traveling alone, of her adopting male attire to obviate this, and finally of her meeting with Joe. Her life subsequent to this event was already known to Bob, and did not need repeating.

"That's the whole story," she said, in conclusion, "and although I may have been imprudent, I was not much wrong. Do you think I was?" she appealingly asked.

During her recital Bob had been much affected by the woe it told of, and when she had asked the question he could not find in his heart to say other than:

"I am sure you have done nothing wrong although, as you say, you were imprudent; for you have since entailed on yourself a long series of hardships and dangers."

"I care nothing for that," returned Retta. "As a child, I dared do things that boys, much older than myself, shrank from, and I'm so glad you think I've not done wrong."

"Well, well—say no more," said Bob, kindly.

"Bob—does—does Joe know?" asked Retta, a moment later.

"No."

"Are you going to tell him?"

"That is just as you say."

"Then do not."

"Very well. Now try and go to sleep, for you need rest sadly," said Bob, leaving Retta to herself; and her mind being relieved somewhat, she soon sank into a gentle slumber, from which she awoke some hours later much refreshed.

After leaving Retta, Bob went to the filtering vessels for a drink, but found scarce enough fresh water to satisfy the thirst of a bird.

The truth was, that as the sea water filtered through, it left a saline incrustation on the inside of the vessel, which, as it thickened, diminished the quantity of fresh water which oozed through the pores of the stone.

Discovering this incrustation, Bob knocked it off; still, although it had a good effect, he found that it had not accomplished what he had expected it would.

This was accounted for by the fact that the pores of the stone were themselves partially filled with salt.

Retta, in her feverish condition was continually asking for a drink, and the cupful which had filtered through during the time she had been asleep, Bob carried in to her, although his own throat was parched with thirst.

After this period he was compelled to even deny her all the water she wanted, yet all there was to be had he gave her, taking not so much as a drop for himself.

And Joe refrained from drinking any of the precious liquid when he learned how much more it was needed by Ben, for so Retta still remained to him, than himself.

Joe searched for and obtained several pieces of sandstone, and commenced drilling them out to make other filtering vessels; but bad luck attended his efforts, for in both instances, when nearly finished, he broke them.

Vexed and impatient at his want of success he tried again, but bad luck still clung to his efforts, and as this was the last available piece of sandstone it seemed as though they were to be compelled to go thirsty, as every drop that trickled through the other vessels made it more different for the next to follow:

But it is always darkest before dawn, and so it proved in this case, for when their very vitals seemed consumed by the raging desire for water, hope dawned with the appearance of a bank of clouds, which, hanging low, were drifting rapidly toward them.

Soon the low rumble of far-off thunder greeted their ears.

The rumbling grew louder as it came nearer, and when satisfied that it was going to rain, they brought upon deck every vessel in the *Demon* which could contain water.

Rapidly the storm-cloud approached, and simultaneously with a heavy peal of thunder, the clouds yielded their contents first in big pattering drops, then in a very deluge.

As the first drops fell, Bob and Joe turned up their faces and allowed the great large drops to fall into their open mouths; then, after sufficient had fallen to cover the bottoms of several of the receptacles, they seized these and eagerly drained the contents.

It fairly poured for over half an hour, during which, as fast as the vessels were filled, they were carried below and emptied into the fresh water-tank, and when this God-sent shower had passed, they had stored away twenty-five or thirty gallons.

It was an hour of rejoicing for all, for their greatest need had been supplied. During the shower, so intent had they been in profiting by it that they had not noticed the discontinuance of the eruption from the volcano; but Joe soon after discovered the fact, and drew attention to a hazy appearance of the atmosphere.

Bob and Joe went up on deck.

Far away to the southeast, the shower that had passed over them was disappearing below the horizon.

The sun was shining, but not with its accustomed brightness. It either had taken to itself a yellowish cast, or else its rays obtained it from the atmosphere.

And this was the case; for on gazing above them, in any direction they would, the air had a dead, dull, heavy appearance. Glancing at the crater of the volcano, they could now see issuing from it a smoke, similar to the color of the air, but much more dense. The wind had completely died away, and this smoke mounted in a straight column far up toward the heavens above.

Gradually the air assumed a darker, heavier appearance, and a sulphurous smell began to pervade it. The sea, whose usual troubled beat could be heard about the rock-bound island, quieted down and could no longer be heard; and as the boys looked down upon the surface they saw that it too had assumed this same yellow, muddy look.

Not as much as a breath of air stirred—not the slightest sound occurred to break the stillness, which was of an ominous, death character.

It was a scene to inspire one with awe. What portended these things?

The boys knew not, and yet they could not but admit an inward feeling of fear—a presentiment of something about to happen.

Had they been brought up in the torrid zone or that portion of it which is volcanic in character and frequently visited by earthquakes, they would have known that it was the forerunner of one of those convulsions which now and then seem to shake the earth to its very center.

"Let's go in," said Joe, thus echoing Bob's unspoken thoughts.

Bob passed inside first and Joe followed, and from some instinctive reasoning closed and fastened the deck-door.

But a few minutes later, there came a heavy report, a quick shock, which threw Bob and Joe to the floor; then they felt that the island was rocking to and fro.

Bob rushed to the pilot-house, dropped the shutter and gazed out through the aperture in it.

The rocking had thrown them off near the edge of the cliff. Her prow finally passed it, and then inch by inch the *Demon* worked over, and slowly she crept further on.

"My God!" groaned Bob, "when she reaches the center she will fall, and we will be dashed to pieces on the rocks."

He watched the *Demon's* progress over the edge of the cliff with a horrible fascination, until finally, the center reached, her prow tilted downward, then a terrified wail burst from Bob's lips, just as there came a frightful

shock, and the *Demon* started on her terrible downward course.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE DEMON ESCAPES.

As, inch by inch the *Demon* worked over the edge of the precipice, the earth continued its convulsions.

A great land swell caused the peak to rise and sink.

There came a rapid succession of jars and a continued roaring sound, then, just as the *Demon* fell, in the same rapid manner in which the island had been forced up from the bottom of the sea, it descended to its former state, and the *Demon* struck, not the bed of rock which Bob expected it would, but the water, cleaving which, it descended some distance, much in the manner of a diver, when, as the water-chambers were empty, it arose to the surface and rested as peacefully there as though its course had never been disturbed.

Bob with closed eyes had stood waiting for the shock, but so easily and gently did the *Demon* cleave the water that he was confounded.

When she righted and returned to the surface, he darted to the side of the pilot-house and gazed out through the hole in the shutter, he having, as the reader will remember, dropped it ere the fall took place.

Before him he saw nothing but a long stretch of troubled waters.

He quickly run the shutter up and looked for the island.

It was gone, while at the spot about where he knew the crater must have stood, the water was leaping up high in great masses.

The roaring, rumbling sounds still continued, and Bob, afraid longer to stay in the neighborhood, drew Pull 1 to its fullest extent, and the *Demon* glided rapidly away from the spot where had been seen so much of interest although of deadly peril. Half an hour's run left the spot away behind them, and outside of the circle of the earth's disturbance, Bob felt safe.

The abrupt descent had thrown Ben and Joe from their feet, and upset all the loose articles, while the treasure boxes which had been neatly piled up, were thrown violently down, many of them being broken open by the fall and the weight of their contents.

The two lads, however, beyond being a little bruised were none the worse for their fall, and did all in their power to facilitate the *Demon's* progress away from the place of their dangers.

Bob's first move, after a sufficient distance had been gained, was to turn the *Demon* about and lay her on her course toward Hermit Island.

It was not until he had been running a number of hours, however, that he, chancing to look at his compass, found that the *Demon* had deflected a few points from the course he had laid her to.

He threw the wheel far enough over to make up, as he supposed, for the deflection, and then, as the course was perfectly clear, strapped the wheel, and beyond a mere casual glance ahead, did not watch her movements.

It was far into the night, that, in comparing his course with the compass, he found out that even a greater deflection had taken place.

He could not understand it—was nonplused for a reason to account for her strange movements.

Again he laid her prow at a particular point of the compass, and, watching both, he discovered an almost imperceptible change.

Could it be that the steering apparatus had become disarranged?

Seizing the wheel, he threw it first to one side and then the other.

She promptly obeyed the slightest change he made.

"What can be the matter?" he mused, when he became satisfied that the steering gear was all in working order.

He examined the compass.

Apparently it was all right.

He tried them together again.

Still they disagreed.

"It must be something with the steering-wheel or rudder," thought Bob. "I'll take the compass as the safest, anyhow," and although it required careful watching all the while, and a continual working of the wheel, Bob kept her course with the compass.

In this, however, he did wrong.

For this reason.

It has been clearly established that earthquakes and sudden volcanic actions, such as the raising of the island from which they had just made their escape, if not caused by, at least accompanied by strong magnetic currents, which seem, for the time being, to depolarize the true magnetism which pervades and animates all nature.

As an example of this, you will find no mariner on the face of the globe, who after even visiting a country which even may be only susceptible at long periods to volcanic or subterranean disturbances, who will trust entirely to his compass, for he finds that the magnetic needle has in some way lost its power to always act correctly.

The same mariner has also found that presence at the time of these disturbances invariably so affects the needle that, for a time at least, and perhaps for all time, it is absolutely worthless.

Bob, of course, did not know these things, the consequence being that he did not distrust his compass, which nevertheless was unequivocally lying all the while.

For this reason, then, Bob, although he imagined that by following the directions of the magnetic needle that he was going in a perfectly straight course, was really describing a sort of semi-circle.

Ben, who had been to sleep, finally came up to relieve him; so, after explaining the circumstances to him, and showing him what to do, Bob went down stairs to seek a much-needed repose.

Ben had been on duty perhaps two hours, when suddenly the electric light on the *Demon's* prow gave a few slight flutters and then totally died out.

He immediately disconnected the electricity so as not to waste it, and then by the light of the lamp above the pilot-house pursued his course.

The lamps had all been refurnished with charcoal at about one time, and presently the large lamp gave a fluttering light for an instant, and then, too, expired.

Bob had told Ben that the way before them was perfectly clear, so, as he expected Joe to come up to relieve him shortly, he forbore calling anyone or stopping the *Demon*, as the time of Joe's coming would be soon enough to care for the lamps.

So reasoned Ben, and fatal reasoning it was for the *Demon's* welfare, as after events will show.

As expected, Joe, an hour or so later, put in his appearance, and to him Ben delivered the charge of the wheel, saying as he did so:

"I'll get some charcoal and fix the lamps."

"That's dangerous running without any light," was Joe's comment.

"Oh, no," returned Ben. "Bob says the way is clear. I'll be back in a minute."

The charcoal box was kept in the battery-room, and descending to it Ben selected four pieces of the article and returned to the pilot-house, intending to light the large lamp first.

He mounted a large step-ladder, and had just placed his hand inside the lamp when Joe said in a voice of alarm:

"I think I can see the outlines of land ahead."

"Nonsense," replied Ben, who had great faith in Bob's judgment, "Bob said we should not reach Hermit Island until noon, and nothing could interpose before we reached it."

Joe answered not, but with strained eyes peered out ahead.

Ben affixed one piece in its place. Then the other.

He stepped down from the ladder just as Joe cried:

"'Tis not nonsense. See, there is the outlines of land. I'm going to stop her."

"No, do not," said Ben. "Here, I'll light the lamp, and show you that you are wrong."

As he spoke he made the connections by turning a thumbscrew.

Instantly a brilliant light shone out.

The *Demon* was under full headway, dashing along at meteor-like speed, when the electric light, as its rays widened, disclosed what Joe had predicted was near—*land*—and in the shape of rocky bluffs, which towered far up toward heaven, the line here and there broken by low stretches of rocky beach above whose shallow wake projected great black water-dogs, as the tars term rocks, which, submerged at high, are uncovered at low tide.

"Turn off—turn off," cried Ben, as he caught a glimpse of the rocky base against which the dashing waves were churned into foam. "Back her—quick—for heaven's sake—*back her*—BACK HER!" the last words being almost shrieked.

Joe's hand leaped quickly to Pull 2; he drew it completely out.

Then he changed to Pull 3.

The powerful engine reversed the screw rapidly.

The *Demon* lost a portion of her headway.

But too late!

For the next moment came a tremendous shock, which threw both boys from their feet to the floor.

The *Demon* had struck one of the numerous water-dogs, whose head was lifted a few feet above the surface.

As the prow struck, it lifted, and their headway carried her more than half way out of the water upon its apex.

Then the still reversing screw slowly drew the *Demon* back.

Bob had been thrown from his bed by the violence of the shock.

Quickly springing to his feet, and dreading he knew not what, he dashed in the direction of the pilot-house, and reached its stairs just as the *Demon* began gliding back.

He hesitated a moment, then ran lightly up the stairs, and entering the pilot-house, asked in excited tones:

"For heaven's sake, boys, what is the matter? Speak quickly!"

Ere an answer could be given the *Demon* had descended from the water-dog, and a gurgling sound, accompanied by a settling motion, carried the whole story with living power to Bob's brain.

The *Demon* had struck a rock, her iron prow had been shattered—demolished, and in the gap the water was rushing.

They must quickly escape or be drowned.

"Quick! quick!" Bob cried. "We must get out. Follow me!" and he darted out, and down the stairs, Ben and Joe close behind.

They were compelled to stop, though, for already was the water mounting toward the pilot-house, and then to return.

It had been Bob's intention to escape by way of the deck-door, but this was now impossible.

What could they do?

They were penned in the pilot-house, a perfectly air and water-tight compartment with no means of exit, save that which led to the interior of the *Demon*, now already filled with water, and hence sure death to attempt to venture into.

The three boys stood in the center of the floor and gazed blankly at each other.

"Bob—Bob," at last cried Ben, in an appealing tone, "you can find some way of escape, I know you can. Try, try, *try*, for I know you can."

There came a jar.

The *Demon* had struck the bottom.

Slowly the water mounted.

It enters the pilot-house.

The floor is submerged.

Bob stands inert, motionless, until the rising water reaches his knees.

Then, as if recalled suddenly to himself, he

glances quickly about him, a look of hope resting for a moment in his eye.

But his hope was fleeting, a look of despondency usurped its place; the water has reached his waist—he mutters:

"'Tis useless, we can't escape."

"Bob—Bob," wailed Ben. "*You do not try.*"

Stung by the words, and realizing how fully Ben depended on him, he cast off the lethargy, and like lightning revolved in his mind their chances of escaping the terrible death that seemed in store for them.

The water all the while was slowly mounting upward, but its progress was less and less fast, as the air in the pilot-house, which could not escape was pent up in a so much smaller space.

It became difficult to breathe, so heavy was the atmosphere.

A chance of escape presented itself to Bob's mind, and although loth to break the *Demon's* engine, he seized a small hand-bar and with it, endowed with an almost superhuman strength, he wrenched off one of its heavy connecting arms.

"Take hold," he cried, and using it as a battering-ram with all their strength the three shot it out against the glass sides of the pilot-house.

"Be ready," cried Bob, "for the glass once broken, a moment's stay after *will be death!*"

Again the heavy iron bar was poised.

"Now," cried Bob.

Forward it dashed, there came a shivering sound as a great large hole was opened, then a horrible gugle as the water forced the air out, and our three friends found themselves struggling in the water.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ATTACK ON THE PIRATES.

As the crash occurred, Bob dropped the iron bar, and clasped Ben in his arms, at the same time giving Joe a shove toward the opening.

The air rushing out, caught Joe with his mouth open when the water rushed in, which caused him to strangle badly.

The ending of the circumstance, so far as Joe was concerned, would probably have been fatal, had not Bob dropped Ben, and seizing Joe, have given him another shove which sent him through the opening.

To grab Ben was but the work of an instant, and him, too, Bob passed through before he himself did so.

Joe reached the surface, and had sense enough left to seize hold of the water-dog, by whose side he found himself.

Ben had taken matters very coolly, and when he arrived at the surface, not seeing Joe or the rock, he paddled about until he saw Bob's head appear—only to disappear instantly, for so long had Bob remained inside the *Demon* after the others had left that he was well nigh caved in.

Then Ben, realizing Bob's condition, approached the spot where he had disappeared, and, as he came up again, he seized him by the hair.

Joe by this time was himself again, and by the first faint gleams of the coming day saw this event.

He threw himself in the water, and with Ben's assistance he soon had Bob on top of the water-dog, whose smooth round top afforded so little foothold that they soon after took him to the shore, which was but several hundred feet distant.

Bob was exhausted, but not unconscious, and so, soon recovered.

The brightly-burning light of the *Demon* shed a gentle radiance in the water which they could plainly see, and a good thing it was, for it clearly defined her position.

They remained near the spot until well on in the afternoon, when they arose, according to a preconcerted arrangement, and started off on a tour of exploration.

They skirted along the shore for a while when they found that its character changed, for now the land sloped gently back from the water, and its side was studded with timber.

"Let's go inland," suggested Joe.

"Agreed," replied both Bob and Ben. So they started up the sloping hill, which proved not near so high as they had expected, they soon finding themselves on its summit, while glancing down the opposite side, Bob caught glimpses of a sheet of water.

Shinning a tree, to get a better view, he saw a narrow channel, which entered from the shore and bending sharply, ran parallel with it.

Following up this narrow sheet of water with his gaze, it finally rested on a vessel, while just beyond her, at the head of this arm of the sea, on the gently sloping hill, a collection of houses.

A cry of surprise burst from his lips, and of joy also, for he imagined of course that he must be gazing upon a civilized community, although what they could be doing in this out-of-the-way quarter of the globe puzzled him to determine.

At length something in the appearance of the vessel caused a suspicion to flash across his mind.

"They were pirates," so he thought.

Descending, he communicated what he had seen, and Ben, after going up and having a look, gave it as his idea that she was a pirate and, moreover, looked wonderfully like the craft on board of which Yawpey had been taken.

Excited by curiosity, Bob determined to approach nearer this village, if such it can be called, and skirting the ridge of the tongue of land, they made a slight detour, and approached close enough to see objects quite distinctly.

As they were standing in the edge of the woods, a near by voice, and the tramp of feet startled them.

They quickly slunk back, and dropped out of sight amid some underbrush.

The voice came nearer.

The words were distinguishable.

"I'd like to blow up sky-high the hul caboodle uv the murderin' devils, particularly old Tarball. Yah! they kin laugh at me and make fun ov me all they wants to, but by the wooden jumping-jack uv my grandfather, that I used to play with when I was a squaller, I'll"—

"What'll you do?"

It was Bob who asked the question, as he rose up before the speaker, who, at first started back in alarm, halted, hesitated, advanced, gazed at him fixedly for a moment, and then wildly crying:

"Hurroo! hurroo! hurroo!" turned a cart-wheel, bent his head and looked from between his legs at Bob, then turned a few somersaults, stood on his head, and finally with extended arms, rushed up and threw himself so forcibly on Bob, and hugged him so tight, that equilibrium could not be maintained, and they went to earth, where they rolled over and over, Yawpey, for it was he, gasping between whiles:

"By the great, jumpin' Jehosaphat, Bob, who'd a tho't it—Bob and Yawpey—yah—fried pork and 'lasses's good—so it is to see you."

Bob was glad to see Yawpey, but not so much so that he had to express his exuberance in this manner, and as quickly as possible he released himself, then retiring further into the woods, he bade Yawpey tell what had happened him.

"We got in yisterday, and such a time as there wos last night—so drunk that they wos stiffer'n sticks of wood, an' they're at it agin—don't stop for nothin', and"—

"And," interrupted Bob, "begin at the beginning."

Thus checked, Yawpey began the story of his capture, and the events that had happened, which as the reader knows for the most part, we will not repeat.

The part relating to the capture and destruction of the *Stanwix*, was listened to with horror by all three.

The story of Yawpey made several things plain to Bob.

One was that even if they could, it would be useless to return to the wreck, since all the treasure had been recovered.

Another was, for he had learned of the presence of Pat Harris on board the *Stanwix*, through Joe, that any hope of penning that person in a corner and demanding a confession of his innocence of the murder of Mary Harris, was now futile.

As Yawpey had said, the men of the *Black Devil* were at it again, that is, drinking, and the four boys lay in the edge of the woods and listened to the noise of the carousal long after night had fallen, and canvassing the means of leaving Pirate Island without being discovered, for of course after hearing Yawpey's story and learning of the character of its inhabitants, they did not wish to come into contact with them.

And how went everything with the wrecked crew on the opposite side of the island?

It will be remembered that the captain of the *Stanwix* and Jim Devon remained, on the day of the pirate's arrival on the hill, watching the events that transpired in the pirate village until after nightfall.

Then slowly and with grave faces, they and the few men who had come with them retraced their footsteps down the mountain's side and to where the remainder were encamped.

A council of war was called.

The question was—what should they do?

Should they take the aggressive, or should they assume the defensive?

Their numbers were so few that to attack the pirates seemed almost like a piece of folly, and yet should the pirates attack them as they surely would, should they be discovered, they would be just as badly off.

When called on for an opinion the captain said:

"If we could have attacked them awhile ago, when in the midst of their carousal, we would have stood a good show of success. To attack them in their sober moments would be utter folly, for they outnumber us, three to one, and are much better armed. If they continue their spree to-morrow—if a majority wish it, we will sweep suddenly down on them and trust to God to help us through."

The undercurrent of common sense pervading the captain's words was felt by all, and when seconded *in toto* by the detective, it was unanimously resolved, if opportunity offered, to carry them into effect.

Two men immediately started for the eminence to act as lookouts, and the moment that morning broke, the castaways were all astir, and frequent visits were made to the wreck of the *Stanwix* in search of weapons.

The day passed on, hour by hour, when, at about two or three o'clock a signal agreed upon was shown upon the top of the hill, which conveyed the intelligence.

"The pirates are continuing their carousal."

Later, another was exhibited, meaning:

"Chances good—they are all joining in—bring on the men."

The captain addressed a few words of encouragement to his men, and bade them, if they met in conflict with the pirates, to fight to the uttermost, for it would be for life or death.

Then, in single file, the captain leading, Jim Devon second, they ascended the hill.

By the time they reached the top it was near sundown.

Taking the glass, the captain scanned the village below him through it, and satisfied that the right moment had come, he led the way down towards the pirates' home, keeping in the woods and making a detour which he calculated would bring him out in the rear of the huts.

An hour passed—two—three—and the pirates' orgie had reached its height.

Drunken men and women reeled and staggered about.

Not a person, excepting, perhaps, two or three, of the whole pirate village were sober.

They were Darrell's wife, Billy, the cabin boy of the *Black Devil*, and Tom Darrell himself.

He had run a long and successful career of wickedness, but somehow he felt, as he sat within his hut that night, listening to the wild shouts and blasphemies of his drunken followers, that it was nearly over.

He had a presentiment—something that told him so.

He bent his head into his hands, and tried to think it a foolish fancy, but, like Banquo's ghost, "it would not down."

As he sat there, the drunken shouts gave place to a wild cry of alarm.

"What could it mean?"

He paused—listened.

Again it came, and with it was mingled the report of a revolver, then another, and another.

Leaping to his feet, he darted toward the sounds of the conflict, to behold a small body of determined men valiantly battling with his horde of drunken followers.

Their presence surprised him, but he had no time for conjectures as to who they were, or whence they came, and shouting and yelling like a fiend, he led his men on to battle.

"Charge!" yelled the captain, and the crew of the *Stanwix* rushed down pell-mell upon the cut-throat gang.

Suddenly the attacking party receive an addition of four persons, and it turns the scale in their favor; for the pirates, too drunk to fight well, break and run.

But under the magic of their leader's voice, they rally.

"Charge!"

Away the attacking party rushes.

The two sides meet.

Somewhat sobered, the pirates fight like devils.

Now the *Stanwix* men have the best of it, now the pirates.

Shouts, groans, yells, curses, commands fill the night air, a shriek of mortal agony now and then telling of one who has gone to meet a just God.

But the right triumphs at last.

One final charge is made, it is their last hope, and the little handful that is left of the *Stanwix* men, fight with the fury of a tempest.

They win; the pirates, disheartened by loss of numbers, flee.

They attempt to leave the harbor with the *Black Devil*, but are intercepted.

The living pirates were secured and bound.

The long night passes and morning breaks, disclosing a bloody scene, for stretched out in death on all sides are the bodies of those who perished in the conflict.

Bob had escaped with but a slight scratch.

Joe was entirely unhurt.

Ben was suffering from an ugly wound in the arm; Yawpey was dead.

Poor Yawpey, *requiescat in pace*.

Leaving Joe with Ben, Bob, by curiosity drawn, went to have a look at the surviving pirates.

As he passed the row of wounded, he suddenly started, for before him lay Pat Harris.

The mortally-wounded man saw Bob at the same moment.

"Pat Harris," said Bob, solemnly, as he saw that the man must die, "we have met in your dying moments; do you, will you retract the charge of murder against me?"

A malignant scowl crossed his features, but as he would have answered there came a sudden paling of his features, his under jaw dropped and his eyes closed.

Had he then died without clearing Bob of the stain of murder?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE CONFESSION.

At first Bob thought that Pat Harris had departed this life, but an examination speedily disproved the fact, he having merely fainted through weakness.

As Bob was seeking means to recover him from this faint, Jim Devon and the captain

approached, the detective being in search of Pat Harris.

"Ah! here he is," said Devon, while the captain, after staring hard at Bob, exclaimed:

"Will wonders never cease! How in the world came you here, Joe?"

"My name is not Joe, sir," replied Bob. "But have you any liquor with you?"

"I have," said Devon, taking out a flask which he had provided himself with from the pirates' store-room, exhibiting no surprise at Bob's presence.

He placed the flask to Pat's lips, and presently he opened his eyes.

"Pat," cried Bob, immediately, "will you retract that charge, and tell the truth, here in the presence of these gentlemen?"

"No—you, never!" almost yelled the dying man.

"See here, Pat Harris. Do you know me?"

"No."

"I am Jim Devon."

"The devil you are!" gasped Pat.

"Yes, and I want you to make me a confession of some few things before you die."

"I won't," stubbornly replied Pat.

"If you don't," returned Devon, in a cold tone, "I'll arrest you for murder, and hang you to the nearest tree in a jiffy!"

Cowed by the words, and knowing the reputation of the detective for carrying out his word, Pat Harris relented, and answered all the question put to him by Devon in the presence of Bob and the captain.

Writing materials were found on board the *Black Devil*, and after being reduced to writing Pat Harris signed the following, which we will premise by stating is but an abridgment of the original.

* * * * "And I furthermore state that these two boys, Robert and Joseph, sons of William Drew, were delivered into my hands by James Thompson, a driver, who, stealing from Mr. Drew, was convicted and sent to prison, from which he escaped, and afterward, in a spirit of revenge, stole the boys. They were to have been drowned, but my wife had just lost her own babe, and I allowed her to keep the eldest child, Robert. The other I told her I had drowned, but really I gave it to a saloon keeper named Black.

"He ran away from Black, was on board the *Stanwix*, and was lost while down in a diving-suit. * * * The other, Robert, I saw here by my side but a minute ago. * *

* * He was convicted of the murder of my wife, but he was not guilty. It was an accident. I had been beating her. He dared me to strike her again, and said he would shoot me if I did. I tried to take the pistol away from him, and it went off accidentally. I testified against him on the trial with another man, who was hired by David Brocks to say that he had seen the shooting done. David Brocks knew that these two boys were Mr. Drew's sons, and wanted me to put them out of the way, and offered me large sums to do the job. * * *

The foregoing is true, so help me, God.

his
"PAT HARRIS."
mark

Jim Devon and the captain attested this as witness, and this done both turned and shook Bob heartily by the hand, congratulating him on the good fortune in store for him.

The captain spoke regretfully of the loss of Joe, when Bob informed him that he was alive and well; after which he conducted him to the hut, where Ben was lying down, being kept watch over by Joe.

To say that the captain was delighted at meeting also with Ben, is but a faint description of his joy.

"Joe, old boy," said he, "I thought the *Demon* had gobbled you up."

"Oh, no, not so bad as that. He is not given to cannibalism. There is the *Demon*," and Joe pointed at Bob.

"Bless my soul, is that so?"

"Yes," quietly replied Bob.

"Then you are the fellow that gave us so much trouble?"

"No, you are the fellow that gave me so much trouble. I arrived at the ground first, and had the right to first pickings."

"Well, well, it's all over now, and we won't quarrel," said he, good-humoredly.

And now we must hurry on.

Bob explained to Joe the relationship between them.

"I knew it—I knew it," cried Ben, clapping his hands gleefully together. "You are brothers. I'm so glad, for I like both of you so much."

Then Bob told them the story of his past life, about which before he had been so reticent.

Pat Harris died ere sundown, and was buried in a pit dug for the dead bodies of the pirates in common.

Tom Darrell, the pirate captain, survived the fight, but escaped the guards when they were taking him to the *Black Devil* for confinement, and throwing himself in the water, was drowned.

The few remaining living pirates were conveyed to the *Black Devil's* prison, there to be kept until they could be delivered to the proper authorities.

Explanations as to each other's presence on the island followed, when the really fortunate deflection of the compass needle was explained by the captain.

There was a small council convened, the result of which was that the conclusion was reached that all hands could live amicably together on board the *Black Devil*, and immediate measures for securing the treasure from on board the sunken *Demon* were taken.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE TREASURE RECOVERED.

THE treasure-house of the pirates was broken into, and the contents carried on board the *Black Devil*, after which she was taken out of the harbor and around the shore to near where the *Demon* was lying.

The diving-suits had been recovered from the *Stanwick*, and clad in one of these, Bob descended to the *Demon's* deck and opened the deck-door, after which he passed down the steps, and to the room where the treasure was stored.

Several days' hard work, assisted by Joe, sufficed for Bob to recover the whole of it, which was then stowed away by itself on board the *Black Devil*.

The last thing of value had been recovered from the *Demon*, and Bob, with visor unlocked and hanging back, stood on the *Black Devil's* deck.

"All through?" queried the captain.

"Yes."

"Then you will not go down again, will you?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because I want to take a farewell look at the dear old *Demon*, on board of which so many pleasures have been had as well as perils," and Bob's voice was husky and his eyes dimmed with moisture.

"Fasten the helmet," he said a moment later, which done, he again descended to her deck, went down the stairs, and, as he supposed, for the last time, entered her pilot-house, the battery-room, the bunk-room and the little *salon* adjoining.

"Good-bye! good-bye," he murmured to himself, as, standing on her deck, he gazed regretfully about him, and with his eyes swept her from stem to stern, ere giving the order to be drawn up.

He gave the signal, and as, when going upwards, her outlines grew more and more dim, just ere they faded from sight, he muttered a final "good-bye."

He reached the *Black Devil's* deck, removed the suit, and was ready for the homeward trip.

Once more the vessel entered the pirate's harbor, the women were all taken on board, everything made secure and taut for their long voyage, then they started, leaving the huts standing as they found them.

The so-called wife of Thomas Darrell, evidently a lady, was treated with the utmost respect, particularly when she had related a story of leaving a home of elegance, in company with her new-made husband, a young minister bound for a foreign mission; of the attack of their ship by pirates, she the only person of all allowed to live, and that for a life far worse than death.

The other women, or most of them, had been captives, but long association with the low and brutal, had made them like in feeling and thoughts.

Reader, we will not tire you with a description of the tedious homeward voyage, void of any incident to interest, only saying that the weeks that elapsed before they reached New York, were occupied by Bob in thinking regretfully of the far-away grave, at the head of which stood a board, on which was inscribed, in rude letters:

"Yawpey. A faithful friend."

Jim Devon had told him of his father, of his search, and desire to find his long-lost sons, hence he feared not the reception he would meet at his hands.

Meantime Ben had fully recovered, and when the *Black Devil* cleft the waters of New York Bay, as she approached the metropolis of the New World, the happy trio, with clasped hands, stood side by side, upon the quarter-deck, gazing at the yet distant spires, which each moment grew nearer and more distinct.

But Ben's happiness possessed some alloy, for what was to be his next step?

As he thought of this, a shade of sadness swept over his face, which, being noticed by the observant Bob, he inquired the reason.

"I am thinking of how you and Joe, once without known parents like myself, are soon to meet a kind father, said Ben slowly and sadly.

"He, too, will be a father to you, Ben, or he shall not to me. And once ashore, you must assume your proper position before the world."

Joe glanced suspiciously and wonderingly from one to the other, as Bob uttered these last words, for they betrayed to him the fact of some secret resting between the two.

The captain approached.

"Well, boys," said he, in his usual cheery tone, "we are almost home:" and then addressing himself particularly to Bob, asked:

"Have you yet opened the manuscript which the hermit gave you?"

"No, I had forgotten it. Come into the cabin and I'll do so immediately."

In the presence of the captain, Devon, Ben and Joe, he solemnly broke the seal, and a moment after read the following, written in the form of a diary, which we, for brevity's sake, have cut down, only reserving those parts relating to our story:

"June 14, 18—. On board the *Rover*. The city of New York, even as I write, is fading from my view. In two hours I will be far out on the deep, safe from—sad that I should be compelled to say—pursuit, for it establishes the fact that I am a criminal. The light of another morning will carry with it the intelligence that John Berry, once rich and wealthy, and respected, has fled, and carried with him the funds of the bank of which he was president. And my wife? Can she ever forgive me for the everlasting infamy I bring upon her? * * *

"Sept. 19, 18—. Here I am at last, all by myself, perfectly alone, with money in plenty to carry out my idea for the recovery of the wealth on board the *Esmerelda*. Cursed wealth it has been to me, for I can now realize that I was insane on the subject, else I would never have been tempted to steal that I might find it. I would return to New York, but I cannot pay back what I have taken, so I dare not. Henceforth, I shall devote my life to regaining this wealth, and that gained, I will repay these

things and endeavor to take my place again among honest men. * * *

"January 26, 18—. My plans are all done. Now for work at my wonderful craft. *"

"January 30. I have made a commencement and hope for success. * * *

"July 20th. To day I finished the hull of my sub-marine vessel." * * *

Here in rapid succession came items expressive of disappointments at some failure of theories, when introduced into practice, extending over a period of years.

They were sufficient to have disheartened any man, other than one who was battling for a lost position in society, with a determination to do or die.

"July 19th. To-night I put the finishing touch to my vessel. In the morning I shall try her. Oh, that morning were here. * * "

"July 20. *Failure*. * * *

"September 19. Fourteen years since first I stepped upon this island and my life work not yet completed. To-morrow I go to Brundart for a part of my electrical engine, and if that works—if it does? * * *

"September 25. I have tried my vessel, and God be praised, she works splendidly. I went out on a trip to a neighboring island, and taught the cannibals a severe lesson. They called her a demon; henceforth that shall be her name—she shall be the *Demon of the Deep*. * * *

"September 30. To-morrow I start for the *Esmerelda*. For several days past I have seen a devil-fish lurking about the island, and I must be careful. I close here. I shall seal this manuscript, and leave it here in the hut; and then, should accident happen me, the world may possibly learn what became of John Berry."

Here the story related by the hermit closed, but appended immediately beneath it was the following:

"I am dying. I broke the manuscript open to add these lines. To-day I was attacked by the devil-fish, and received internal injuries, from which I am sure I shall die. Should this fall into anyone's hands I pray he will carry out my plans. My indebtedness amounts to four hundred thousand dollars. Let him pay my debts; the rest he may reserve for himself. My creditors are named herein."

Then followed the names of the various creditors of John Berry, and the amounts due each.

The detective, perhaps, was the most astonished man of the party, for he had been a personal acquaintance of Berry, and fully understood the circumstances connected with his flight.

"Poor misguided man," murmured Ben.

"Yes," said Bob, "call him misguided, but not a criminal. I can sympathize with him. Fourteen long years of penance for his slip. It is enough. Let charity's mantle cover his misdeeds."

"Shall you carry out his wishes?" asked the captain.

"To the letter," promptly returned Bob. "You know I arrived at his habitation on the third day of his death, and in his dying moments I promised to fulfill the conditions imposed on me in this manuscript, and with God's help, I'll do it."

"Bravo!" cried the admiring captain.

They came to anchor off the Battery shortly after, and a party, composed of the captain, who wanted to report the success of his mission, Devon who also wanted to report the success of his to William Drew, and Ben, Bob and Joe, who were to accompany the detective, went ashore.

Devon called a cab, and the four entering, he gave directions to drive to the office of William Drew in Wall Street, for at this portion of the day, the detective knew he would find him there. * * *

But let us precede them a few minutes.

Alarmed by the long-continued silence of the commander of the *Stanwick*, the company who had fitted her out hired a foreign-bound vessel

to sail near where she was supposed to be, and find out if she were actually there.

William Drew, hearing of this through the public press, also made arrangements by which he would have found out from the absent and so long silent detective the result of his labors in the search for his sons.

When he reached the office on the morning of the *Black Devil's* arrival, he found awaiting him there a letter, which told of the detective's remaining on board of the *Stanwix* after leaving the foreign port at which she first stopped, and telling him further that all hope of ever again seeing the *Stanwix* had been abandoned by the company, for the vessel sent in search could find no trace of her, the presumption being that she had perished in a storm.

Sad and disheartened by the intelligence, Mr. Drew bent his head in his hands and inwardly groaned.

A stupefaction seemed to settle o'er him, and when requested to sign several checks he did so in an automatic manner, without even glancing at them.

Seeing his preoccupation of mind, a villainous smile crept over the face of David Brocks.

Taking out his pocket-book, he drew from it a piece of paper on which was written something that caused him to chuckle with glee as he read it.

"Will you sign this check, Mr. Drew?" he asked, advancing and laying it down before that gentleman, a blotter covering all but the place for signature.

"Yes," and with a merely mechanical motion, Mr. Drew appended his name to the document.

Brocks picked it quickly up, and behind the old gentleman's back, he suffered a smile of triumph to light up his face as he surveyed it.

His hour of triumph had come.

Although unwittingly, Mr. Drew had signed a will, transferring to his clerk all his worldly possessions at his death, which Brocks calculated on hastening.

His back was toward the private door, and he does not hear it open, nor any one enter.

The person glances over Brock's shoulders, sees the purport of the words, snatches the instrument from his hands, clasps him by the shoulder and says:

"I arrest you for conspiracy in regard to the murder of Mary Harris."

As if stung by an adder, he quickly turns about. Mr. Drew, roused by the words, glances up, and both see before them, Jim Devon, the detective.

A police officer was called in, and David Brocks sent away, handcuffed, to a prison cell.

At first Mr. Drew protested against this proceeding; but when the paper which he had just signed was placed before him, proof sufficient of the fellow's rascality, he said no more.

Then followed a few minutes of silence, and then Devon laid Pat Harris's confession on the table.

Mr. Drew, picking it up, read it.

"Where are the boys?" he gasped.

"Outside."

"Bring them in."

Bob and Joe were taken in by the detective. A glance at them was proof enough for the heart of Mr. Drew, and—but to intrude on the scene that followed would be sacrilege, and accompanied by the detective we withdraw for an hour, at the expiration of which Mr. Drew and his sons appear, a carriage is called, and the whole party, including Ben and the detective, are rapidly driven to Mr. Drew's residence on Fifth Avenue.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

CONCLUSION.

ALTHOUGH it was unnecessary, Jim Devon furnished undoubted proofs that the two boys were Mr. Drew's sons, and when the world

learned of their recovery, congratulations began pouring in from all quarters.

It is the evening of the second day of occupancy of their Fifth Avenue home, and the happy Mr. Drew, his two sons and Ben are in the parlor.

As yet Bob had not informed his father of Ben's real sex, but it had been agreed between them that it should be told that evening in the parlor.

For Bob's sake Ben had been made welcome to the home of Mr. Drew.

"Father," began Bob, the yet unaccustomed word sticking slightly in his throat, "I have to-night to tell you something concerning Ben, who has been sailing under false colors."

"How so?" inquired Mr. Drew, while at the same time there came a clanging of the door-bell. "Hang it," he exclaimed, impatiently, "why can't people leave me alone for a little while?"

The parlor door opened, and the servant announced "Mrs. Berry and Mr. Raymond."

Mrs. Berry, having heard of the recovery of the two boys, determined to lose no time in congratulating Mr. Drew, and hence, under escort of her brother, she had come just at that moment.

Her congratulations over, she bade the boys a warm, cheery welcome, and then glanced inquiringly at Ben, who had modestly shrunk back in a corner.

As he turned his face so that the light struck fairly upon it, Mrs. Berry gave a violent start and clasped her hands to her heart.

"What is the matter?" queried Mr. Drew.

"A momentary pain—there—it is past;" then, turning to her brother, she asked in an undertone, which, however, reached Bob's ears:

"Did you ever see such a strong likeness?" at the same time intimating Ben by her manner.

"To whom?"

"To Retta, as she would be at this time."

"Excuse me," said Bob, a wild hope creeping up in his mind. "I didn't mean to listen, but I heard what you said. Did you not say something about Retta?"

"Yes."

"Who is she?"

"My daughter; lost years ago in a railroad collision."

"My God!" gasped Bob, "can it be? Did she afterwards live with a Doctor Banks?"

"She did. Oh, what do you know of her?" cried the mother. "Speak! speak! do you know aught of her?"

"Yes."

"For God's sake, then, tell me what you know."

"Your daughter lives, and is in perfect health," said Bob, not daring yet to blurt out the truth.

Ben yet stood in the corner, his arms extended, his eyes filled with tears of joy.

"Where is she?" asked the mother.

Involuntarily Mrs. Berry's eyes sought Ben's. The outstretched arms, the advancing, faltering steps told the truth.

She glanced toward Bob, he smiled a confirmation, then came a simultaneous cry of "Retta, my daughter!"

"Mother!" and they, the long separated mother and daughter, were locked in each other's arms.

Joe's amazement can be better imagined than described.

Ben was a girl.

Could it be possible?

We will pass over the next two hours, during which questions innumerable were propounded and answered.

As Mrs. Berry, her mother, and Retta, were about to leave, a thought entered Bob's mind, and he asked:

"Excuse my seeming impertinence Mrs. Berry; but your husband, what was he?"

The wording caused a flush to mount to the

lady's cheeks, and suspecting the truth Bob asked:

"Was his name John Berry?"

"Yes," she faintly replied.

"He left New York many years ago?"

"Yes."

"Was a bank president?"

"Yes."

"Then Ben—excuse me—Retta, can give you the history of his life subsequent to that event."

They departed, and when they had arrived home Retta gave them the story of her misguided father's life as she had heard it.

What need of prolonging this story further?

Clothing of a proper character was soon made, and Retta appeared before the world in her true character.

The pirates were sent to prison, and after trial, were hung.

David Brocks hung himself in his cell.

The women from Pirate Island were allowed to go whither they chose, Tom Darrell's wife finding a home with relatives, who had long given her up as dead.

Billy, the cabin boy of the pirate, went to sea again in the merchant service.

Jim Devon received the reward promised him by Mr. Drew, in addition to a handsome bonus, which enabled him to withdraw from the profession and establish for himself an elegant home in the country.

The captain of the ill-fated *Stanwix* received high encomiums from the company, and money enough to enable him to purchase an elegant clipper ship.

As for Bob and Joe, after selling the jewels on board the *Black Devil*, and realizing on the gold, they found themselves in possession of nearly a million dollars.

First they paid the debts of John Berry, which, when paid with interest, left them over a hundred thousand dollars.

This they divided into four equal parts, one going to Retta, one to the relatives of Yawpey, and the remainder between the two.

Of course the confession of Pat Harris was laid before the authorities, which relieved Bob of any stain upon his name.

One other thing he did shortly afterward which we must not forget, since it shows how well Bob could remember a kindness.

He hunted up the captain of the brick sloop, who had so kindly aided him at the time of his escape from Sing Sing Prison, and remembered both him and his crew in a decidedly substantial manner.

As he promised the dying hermit, hearing the wish expressed by Mrs. Berry, he sent to Hermit Island, and had the remains brought to New York, where, after appropriate ceremonies they were interred in Greenwood.

Well, dear readers, here we are at last.

Has THE DEMON OF THE DEEP pleased and interested you?

We trust that it has, and we add but two more words—

[THE END.]

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